

THE FINAL WORD ON DR. WHO • GEORGE PAL'S PUPPETOONS

# FANTASTIC FILMS™

The Magazine of Visual Fantasy and Science Fiction

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# ALIEN

*DIRECTOR RIDLEY SCOTT INTERVIEWED*

**The 8th Annual Paris Science Fiction and  
Fantasy Film Festival • The Quatermass  
Films (Five Million Miles To Earth, The  
Creeping Unknown, The Enemy Within)**





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<b>REACTION</b> .....	<b>4</b>
comments, suggestions, corrections, complaints, footnotes, explanations, threats and promises of glory from our readers	
<b>ALIEN EXCLUSIVE: DIRECTOR RIDLEY SCOTT IN AN IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW</b> .....	<b>8</b>
the man behind the sf/horror blockbuster really tells all first of two parts	
<b>ALIEN PRE-PRODUCTION: THE ARTISTS</b> .....	<b>15</b>
a look at the alien paintings and sketches of ron cobb, h.r. giger, moebius and chris foss	
<b>THE STARSHIP "NOSTROMO" A TECHNOLOGICAL FAIRYLAND AND A MOVIE SET TO REMEMBER</b> .....	<b>22</b>
a deck by deck breakdown on the alien star-tug	
<b>H.R. GIGER: THE MAN IN BLACK RIDING A NIGHTMARE TO SUCCESS</b> .....	<b>31</b>
the story and art behind the surrealist swiss artist who designed some of the most bizarre and beautiful scenes in alien	
<b>DR. WHO</b> .....	<b>36</b>
what? when? where? why? on a little known cult hero	
<b>THE 8TH ANNUAL PARIS INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY FILM FESTIVAL</b> .....	<b>39</b>
the films were awful but the audience was worse	
<b>PAL'S PUPPETOONS</b> .....	<b>53</b>
a nostalgic look at a unique creation	
<b>THE QUATERMASS FILMS</b> .....	<b>56</b>
an overview of the little-known hammer film trilogy	



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## CONFUSION

While *Fantastic Films* is not one of my regular sources for information on the world of SF film, I do find articles of interest within your pages from time to time. The June '79 issue provoked my interest because of the article on George Pal's *The Conquest of Space*. Like Roy Kinnard, I have considered this film to be something of a neglected, interesting entry in the 50's SF sweepstakes. While not one of Pal's classics, it is nonetheless an exciting and visually beautiful film.

However, in the case of the captions accompanying the photos from the film, your caption writer or author Kinnard has committed some blatant errors, to wit:

The photo, top pg. 49, depicts the space taxi taking the construction crew back to the space station. The man draped across the taxi is Roy Cooper (William Redfield) who has had an attack of nerves and is temporarily paralyzed. Mahoney (Mickey Shaughnessy) is at the controls of the taxi. This takes place near the beginning of the film and most definitely is not, as the caption notes: "... the crew from the Earth shuttle guide the space taxi with ropes during the funeral ceremony." Where that caption comes from is beyond imagining.

The photo, top pg. 51, again shows Shaughnessy at the controls of the space taxi. The caption states that: "... Walter Brooke jockeys a 'spacetaxi' designed by Willey Ley through the inky blackness." Not only is the actor not Walter Brooke, but Willey Ley had nothing to do with the design of the taxi, that being the product of Paramount's special effects unit. In fact, Ley's involvement with the project was slight; Werner Von Braun was the technical advisor on the film.

Kinnard notes that *Destination Moon* was over-burdened with scientific fact and thus was not as interesting as it might have been because of this approach. It must be noted that *Destination Moon* was the first film of its kind and as such was subject to some uncertainties of presentation. It alerted audiences to the concept of space flight and informed them, entertainingly, of some of the basic rules of space travel. Most of these concepts were vital to the plot of the film and their inclusion was necessary. Upon re-viewing these films, it is noted that they are both informative

and interesting, although in the light of subsequent developments, somewhat dated.

Kinnard also confuses the actions of the mission commander, Samuel T. Merritt (Walter Brooke) as regards his sabotage. While landing, he attempts to take off before touching down on Mars. His son Barney (Eric Fleming) overpowers him and the ship is landed safely. Later Brooke, in a religious frenzy, nearly empties the water tanks. He is killed accidentally by his son. The ship does not "crash land."

Until the Viking lander touched down on Mars, all theories of that planet's sur-



face, geological development and surface conditions were conjecture. Thus the quibble over the inference that Mars was depicted as "young and virginal" in *The Conquest of Space* is accurate only in retrospect. At the time the film was produced, the theory that life, Earth life, could and would survive there seemed logical. The Viking landings have not disproved that life cannot survive on Mars; experiments in a Mars environment carried out on Earth indicate, conversely, that many types of plant and animal life could exist with little trouble on Mars. *The Conquest of Space* then, is not that far wrong in this assumption.

All in all, aside from these gaffes, Kinnard's parallels between *The Conquest of Space* and 2001 are most interesting and well thought out. And I am especially grateful to Kinnard and *Fantastic Films* for presenting an examination, however flawed, of this fine film. Craig W. Anderson  
Tracy, California

## GALACTICA BATTLE

Recently I heard that ABC is planning to cancel *Battlestar Galactica*. I am trying to get all the fans of the show to write to ABC and explain to them that *Galactica* has a very loyal following, and that the main reasons that its ratings are down is that it's preempted too much. All fans of the show should write to ABC and to the rest of the networks to suggest that they pick up the show if ABC cancels it, and to Universal, to give them the same suggestions. Also, remember that a legalized letter is preferable, but not necessary. Do not put *Battlestar Galactica* on the envelope or be rude or threatening, but do be brief and polite.

The addresses are: ABC, 1330 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019; NBC, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020; CBS, 51 W. 52nd St., New York, NY 10019; and Universal Pictures, 445 Park Ave., New York, NY 10022. Thank you for your time. Francis Knepper  
Starks, Florida

## SPENCER TRACY?

You may be interested to know that in the picture from the play *R.U.R.* that you reproduced on pg. 60 of your July issue the Irish robot from the left is young Spencer Tracy. You can't hide that Irish mug under a little pancake makeup!

Steven Dhuey  
Madison, Wisconsin

## READING PLEASURE

I think that *Fantastic Films* is the best magazine of its type ever to appear in the publishing history of magazines devoted to science fiction and fantasy in the cinema. Its articles are extremely well-researched and excitingly written. Your in-depth coverage of such major films as *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, *Star Wars*, *Superman*, *Lord of the Rings*, et al., as well as related subjects to these films (their creators, etc.) are invaluable to the serious student as well as the avid fan of such films. I have recently noticed that several bookshops in Honolulu are beginning to carry *Fantastic Films*, and I am glad that there is such a widespread demand for your excellent magazine. I would like to congratulate you on your good and exciting work and want to thank you for the

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reading and study pleasure your magazine affords me.  
Raymond Funamoto  
Honolulu, Hawaii

### WHAT MORE?

First of all, my compliments and best wishes on your fine science-fiction film magazine. I've enjoyed every issue. Despite its verbose and acid fans (re: the present silly war between *Battlestar* and *Star Wars* adherents) I am sure you garner more than enough support to keep going.

I especially enjoy your articles on special effects and the technical side of SF film making, such as the interviews with Ray Harryhausen and Greg Jien. The photographs are good, text well-written... gee, what more can I say?  
Thomas C. Detweiler  
Ann Arbor, Michigan

### PRISONER NOTE

Russell Bates, in his letter which appeared in the July '79 issue, states that "there were upward of nine more episodes in that series [*The Prisoner*] than were ever purchased to be shown in this country."

Unfortunately Mr. Bates is incorrect. A total of 17 episodes were made, even though originally only seven episodes of *The Prisoner* were to be produced.

In October '66 CBS purchased two showings of *The Prisoner* from ITC. It was scheduled by CBS for the Fall of '68 as a weekly one-half hour program (*Broadcasting Magazine*, 10/24/66 and 2/1/67). However, probably because of the unique concept of the series and because of the limited number of episodes, 17, CBS rescheduled *The Prisoner* as a Summer '68 replacement for *The Jackie Gleason Show*. During the Summer of '69, it was repeated by CBS as a replacement for *The Jonathan Winters Show*. Though CBS purchased all 17 episodes from ITC, only 16 were telecast. "Living in Harmony" was the missing episode.

Currently all 17 episodes of *The Prisoner* are in syndication by ITC. The series is usually offered as a package along with *The Champions*, *The Persuaders!* and *Man in a Suitcase*.  
Bill Zimmer  
Dresher, Pennsylvania

### SENSUOUS

You turn out a beautiful magazine. It even feels sensuous and scintillating in one's hands.

I agree that what TV producers have done to the superheroes is a crime. The big thing the producers aimed for was to make them human, but that is not the point of superheroes. How do these people who know nothing of science fiction and heroic fiction get to be producers of these shows? That is the mystery that needs to be solved.

It has just been announced that *Battlestar Galactica* was cancelled, which was not news. Since the week it fell out

of the top 20, I have been expecting it. It was too expensive a show to be retained unless it stayed in the top 20. What is infuriating: it could have stayed there with ease if Glen Larson did not imagine himself a writer. I wrote to him begging him to hire some writers. He never did and the show went from thin to thinner and the mistakes in it were a real irritation to someone even half educated. If Larson is going to insist on producing SF, why can't he study astronomy so he can stop making an idiot's errors?

The article on science fiction in the theatre was a big surprise. I did not realize there had been that many attempts. In '68 I wrote a science fiction play—took place on Earth and had one alien in it so it was not extremely difficult to do—but directors and producers rejected it. One finally told me why. He said SF did not work on stage no matter how good the play was. He advised me to put it back in the closet and write some other kind of play, which I did, but it was a political kind of play and no one would produce it either. With the success of SF movies maybe things will change. I get excited when I read about the stage version of *The Martian Chronicles*. Wish I could have seen it.

I liked the article on Ron Cobb and loved his pre-production sketches. Inspiring!

Merle Taliaferro  
Kingsport, Tennessee

### WORTHY OF APPLAUSE

I'd like to take this opportunity to generally commend your efforts thus far. Your market strategy is apparently bang-on—you're producing a magazine with content approaching (and in some ways exceeding) that found in *Cinefantastique*, but one that appears on the stands more frequently. I like that—it gives you the opportunity to cover both current and retrospective items with equal ease. It provides a nice balance. News doesn't become redundant and the editorial focus of the magazine is not hopelessly mired in the past.

My major complaints are still relatively subjective—even though there has been a marked effort to clean up the Art Direction (particularly on the covers). I still find some layouts (and the pull out poster) to be working at cross-purposes to the general tone of the magazine. The poster should be included only when it's warranted—i.e. when a truly worthwhile piece of art either appears on the scene or is commissioned for a specific project. Even the occasional blow-up of an outstanding frame of film would be a welcome break from the current wave of "art for art's sake." With the new issue I noticed that the poster is no longer a center-fold style pullout and that's welcomed by all of us out here (probably more than you've anticipated) who haven't unhinged a single poster to date. We prod and peak until we're satisfied that there's nothing

worth ruining an issue for and then we get on with our reading. I, for one, do not lament its passing.

Special note must be made of your *Outer Limits* retrospective—it was a thorough and intelligent review of pre-*Star Trek* SF life on the tube. Finally someone had the insight to treat *OL* episodes as short films as opposed to mere "episodes."

*Outer Limits* on the other hand was imbued with a visual style all its own and it was obvious that the look of the series was labored over lovingly. And I'm sure that this look was not mere gimmickry—it seemed to provide a unique universe for these excursions into the fantastic, and reinforced, rather than detracted from the ideas at work.

Highly under-rated in this regard is Dominic Frontiere's scoring, which I feel is the zenith in TV SF music. It constantly soared from the extremely human and touching to the extremely alien and often frightening. It's a sadly overlooked body of work, not only within the mainstream, but also within the cinema of the fantastic. Your article went a long way towards addressing this long-standing debt to a watershed series and a body of "film" work which can stand alongside the best SF cinema ever produced.

On other fronts the interviews are a great idea, far more focused and informative than straight articles—especially when dealing with current films (which seem to suffer from a lack of critical insight when observed through the rose-colored glasses included in every studio press kit). But even in your articles there is a critical neutrality which seems amiss in magazines like *Starlog*, and which is very refreshing in a magazine obviously designed for a youthful market. You appeal to those tastes without pandering to them, and I can appreciate that despite my peripheral age (27)—after all, I know that this magazine is not specifically geared toward the film generation which spawned fans like myself. However, it also doesn't seem geared toward the indiscriminating (of any age) either and that's what I feel is worthy to applaud. You are simply committed to an analysis of the genre and do not pre-suppose that your readership is buying the magazine merely for some stunts and an indiscriminate peep to whatever is currently on view in theaters or on TV sets around the country.

As the magazine matures, I see every reason to anticipate each new issue with increased delight. With *Starlog* becoming the TV Guide of SF magazines, and *Cinefantastique* concentrating on beautiful, but infrequent double issues, *Fantastic Films* is our only regular source of interesting information (and opinion) on the SF cinema. Keep with it, we need this magazine.

Steve Badgley  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

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# ALIEN

## FROM THE INSIDE OUT



An Exclusive Interview with the Director of *Alien*

# RIDLEY SCOTT

Part One by JAMES DELSON

*Before he began his career as a feature film director, an immensely successful television commercial director/producer named Ridley Scott flew to New York and met with executives of The William Morris Agency, the most prominent talent agency in show business. Although they conceded that Scott was gifted, their doubts about his ability to advance from television commercials to full-length movies prevented them from signing him for representation as a feature director. "I was amused by that," Ridley Scott remarked as he lunched in the restaurant of the E.M.U./Elstree Film Studio in England in May of 1979. "It was frustrating, because I knew I could make the transition, but I also knew I had to prove myself before anyone was going to accept me."*

*Acceptance has taken a while for the 39-year-old Yorkshire-born art director/photographer turned director. But the wait seems to have been worth it. The advance word on 20th Century-Fox's *Alien* has been so strong that Scott is already being referred to as the next Kubrick. The comparison, though a little premature, is not altogether misplaced. Both men are fanatical perfectionists, insist on having a hand in every aspect of a film's production, serve as their own camera operators and turn out pictures of gem-like quality. Though only his second film, Scott's *Alien* has the makings of a classic chiller, right up there with *Psycho*, *Jaws*, *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and *Repulsion*. What's more, it has generally excellent special effects and a dense, gritty "hardware" look about it. With nods to screamwriter Dan O'Bannon (interviewed last issue in *Fantastic Films*), producer Gordon Carroll, special effects supervisor Nick Allder, associated producer Peter Poceell, and a host of fantasy artists led by the uniquely talented H.R. Giger, Scott has created what can only be called the first great SF hybrid—the hardware/horror film.*



**FF:** What was your contact with science fiction films before you began *Alien*?

**SCOTT:** Even when I was very young I was terribly aware of effects. My brain's in that direction. But even at a very early age I didn't quite believe the space-ships. I couldn't quite believe the monsters. There was always a barrier. The first time anyone really succeeded was Kubrick in 2001. Stanley's number one, the best in the world. I'd never, never, never, never had any big interest in science fiction before then, even with good films like *The Day The Earth Stood Still*, because I just stared at the effects... they didn't fool me. But Kubrick did.

**FF:** 2001 seems to be the accepted departure point from which quality science fiction films started.

**SCOTT:** It wasn't just fiction anymore. It went beyond that to create reality. That's a marvelous transition to have.





What I'm going to try and get into for my next film is the point where *fantasy* becomes reality.

**FF:** What drives you to make films?

**SCOTT:** Insecurity. I tend to look over my shoulder all the time, anyway. In some respects built-in insecurity is almost a requirement on a work level. It's really like your fuel.

**FF:** Some people have said that *The Duellists*, your first film, had the huge proportions, but lacked the story to support it.

**SCOTT:** A lot of people criticized the story, saying it wasn't strong enough to support the characters. A lot more people thought that the characters of the two men could have been done in greater depth and therefore one maybe would have understood the reason why they fought a little better. But that really means that they actually misunderstood the whole point of the story. So, I

always avoided that argument.

**FF:** It didn't do very well in release, though it has a large cult following.

**SCOTT:** I think that Paramount didn't quite know how to handle it. It won a good prize at Cannes and they could have released it very quickly, using that impetus to generate interest. But they seemed to categorize it as, and I hesitate to use the word, an "art" film. It's what the film business calls a "narrow margin" film. Meaning if it does make any money it'll be by a narrow margin. So they let it sit on the shelf for eight months before releasing it in America.

I mean, the film only cost a million and a half dollars. They could certainly have recouped five or six, which would have made a tidy profit.

**FF:** But that's when Paramount was making five or six or more millions a week with the initial release of *Saturday Night Fever*. Guess they didn't want to

bother with all the work they'd need do to sell *Duellists*, when they'd make the same amount by just collecting checks on the Travolta film.

**SCOTT:** I did feel pretty upset about it, and I'll never see any profits from it. One does like, actually, to make something out of what you spend a year doing.

### TRISTAN AND ISEULT (Unrealized Project—1977)

**FF:** What was your next move?

**SCOTT:** Well, I had a deal with Paramount to do another two films. They asked what I was going to do next, and I told them I wanted to do a film version of the Celtic legend of *Tristan and Iseult*.

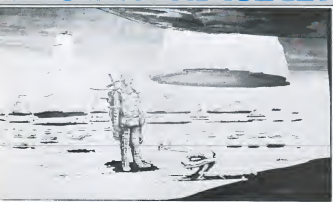
**FF:** As a period piece? The Middle Ages à la Scott?

**SCOTT:** At first, yes. They were immediately interested and gave us about a \$150,000 to develop it—writing, re-

## Pre-production Paintings by Ridley Scott



# TRISTAN AND ISEULT



Above, *Tristan and Gornwal* ride their mounts across a surrealistic landscape. Above, a *Nitsilic* priest and a "Froudian" creature stand amidst the floating rocks.



Above, watch towers are visible every few miles along the coastline as an early warning system against invaders from the sea.

search and so on. While the writer was preparing the script I sat down for the first time in five years and started art directing again, sketching out what I thought the film ought to look like.

**FF:** What did you use for research?

**SCOTT:** All sorts of historical books, and, funny enough, *Heavy Metal*, *Metal Hurlant*.

**FF:** For armor and costume?

**SCOTT:** Yes, but also for fantasy I was going to do *Tristan and Iseult* as a fantasy, with elements of *Star Wars*, Conan, Moebius, modern technology and Celtic legends.

**FF:** Your approach was to take the fantasy route, rather than knights in shining armor?

**SCOTT:** There were four main influences on it: the novel, *Dune*, by Frank Herbert, the fantastic art comic series *Arzach*, by Moebius, which really is *Dune*. I think he'll admit that, the film *Lawrence of Arabia*, by David Lean; and George Lucas' *Star Wars*. I thought *Tristan and Iseult* could be great if we could get these four elements working together.

**FF:** What led to this transition from your original idea of doing the film as a straight medieval romance?

**SCOTT:** *Star Wars*. Remember, I had seen 2001, and it was really the first time science fiction had worked for me. Well *Star Wars* was the second. Fortunately or unfortunately, it changed my film, and changed my life. I just couldn't believe it was so real. I thought, "Jesus Christ! What am I doing? How dare I develop *Tristan* as a straight Celtic legend?" I realized that in the back of my mind I was simply hoping for the best, taking a chance that people would gravitate towards my treatment of the story. *Star Wars* loosened me up completely and broadened my outlook about the way *Tristan* ought to be developed.

**FF:** What was Paramount's reaction to your change in outlook?

**SCOTT:** Well, I went a bit far at first. Take the dragon, for instance. In the legend it's the definitive, classical dragon which *Tristan* inevitably meets. I've never told anyone this, so I'll say this out of the corner of my mouth: The dragon became disguised. *Tristan* finds a sword in a stone and removes it, but the sword is actually a lever, and he sets off this I.C.B.M. which has been entombed for a long time. The missile shoots off and explodes half a mile away and *Tristan* just stares at it. It's almost biblical, and totally accidental on his part.

**FF:** And Paramount said, "No, no, no!"

**SCOTT:** They were confused by it. Simply didn't want it. They said, "Back to the drawing board." I agreed. I wouldn't go that far with it again.

**FF:** You came back to them with what we see in these drawings?

**SCOTT:** Yes, a sort of no-time-no-place world. An abstract world in which anything can exist. Yet I still hung onto

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Seven-foot-tall Salamander people live in the jungle glades. (Note native using salamander tongue to catch an insect.)



Tristan's King Ostrich is fitted with leather riding gear and billowing sunshades which also serve to collect moisture.

to the notion of the knight in armor.

**FF:** Two more elements are evident in the sketches: Japanese and Norse armor.

**SCOTT:** Well, the Norse influence was always there, but the Japanese armor came out of my desire to make things look other-worldly. They go nicely together. This will give an idea of *Tristan* and *Iseult's* production design. Some of the drawings are gone, <sup>has</sup> lost or put away for safe-keeping.

**FF:** Safe-keeping meaning protected against plagiarism?

**SCOTT:** Yes. Some of the ideas about engines, propulsion devices and a few specific visual images cannot be shown yet.

**FF:** Can you talk about them?

**SCOTT:** I'd rather not, at this point.

**FF:** Then let's get on with these examples.

**SCOTT:** I wanted to use these sort of characters from the Sudan, very tall, very thin, very black and very strong people. In fact, when it came to doing *Alien*, the man who played the alien, a fellow called Balagi, looked exactly like that.

**FF:** How did these characters fit into *Tristan*?

**SCOTT:** They live in the jungle, these guys, and they've got salamander's tongues. They live off insects. Imagine a seven-foot-tall guy just standing quietly in a glade. He slowly turns and ... Whap! He takes a mantis off a leaf and crunches it up in his mouth.

**FF:** The animals in this sketch look like an ostrich and a camel. Were you going to add things on to them to make them look different?

**SCOTT:** I was going to use body armor with the King Ostrich, and do something with the camel to make it look slightly odd. That's *Tristan* and *Gorival* riding across the landscape. Those sail-like things on the backs of the animals are not just sunshades. They were to be used to collect moisture and that sort of thing.

**FF:** And you did all of these yourself?

**SCOTT:** Just to give an idea of what I

wanted to the production designer. It's sometimes far too much. Take this for an example. These are rocks that just float into the air every sunrise and sunset. They just lift off the ground. Now to do one or two is feasible, but this lot would cost a fortune. Now see the little white creature? Know the work of the artist Froud? Weird, his stuff. Well that would play a part in *Tristan*. I don't know how we'll make these things work yet, but they'll work themselves out. Well this Froud-thing comes scuttling out of the shadows.

**FF:** Is the figure on the left some sort of robot?

**SCOTT:** No. He's what we call a Nitsilic priest. By penance he is welded into his armor because that's how they killed the martyr originally. They welded him into his armor and strapped him in the saddle and he cooked. So they now walk around in their armor. They're like walking newspapers, so if you pay them

something they will spout local news which may be ten months old.

**FF:** Is that design based on Chinese armor?

**SCOTT:** Yes. What I was trying to do in *Tristan* was drag a lot of things out of the air, but they were real things, based in history. I was saying to Paramount, "Look! This world is wonderful! And half the stuff you've already got here!"

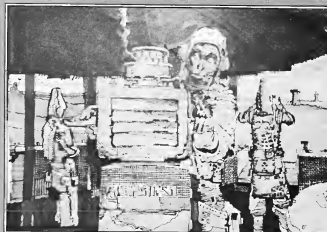
**FF:** Are these watch towers?

**SCOTT:** They're contact outposts, spaced every few miles along the coastline as an early warning system against invaders from the sea.

**FF:** The interior characters look very Moebius-like.

**SCOTT:** He was a major influence on *Tristan*. On *Alien* I had him work up costume designs for the crew which John Mollo (*Star Wars*, *Barry Lyndon*) made for us.

**FF:** The contact outposts have been set up to watch for ships?



The French Heavy Metal artist Moebius was a strong influence on Scott's visual concepts as can be seen in this watchtower interior.



*Huge battleships, reminiscent of Japanese wooden castles and Viking war vessels, transport warriors across the open seas.*

**SCOTT:** Well, the ships are coming. And here they are. That's the stern of the ship, looking at another one behind it.

**FF:** They look like a cross between a Japanese wooden castle and a Viking ship.

**SCOTT:** They were supposed to be vaguely reminiscent of both. Huge battleships that cross the open seas. They carry many warriors and their horses as well.

**FF:** The armor's a Viking-Samurai hybrid as well?

**SCOTT:** That'll probably be changed. When *Star Wars* came out there were a lot of Samurai motifs in it, Vader especially. I think my villain is just too close to him. But you can see how it developed. First he was in this Samurai-type armor. And there's that Moebius-Arzach character in the background. Off to the left of the Samurai is a brazier that's keeping him warm. In the detail you can make out the little armor plates that make up his suit. Those can be seen in *Alien* as the plates on the space suits. When this project came to a halt I wanted to get me rocks off some way.

**FF:** Now we go aboard ship to see your villain?

**SCOTT:** I just had to chuck him out. Too much like Vader. But you can see where his helmet came from. It's a real



*At left, this sketch of a fully armored invader shows the obvious Viking-Samurai motif to his attire. Middle, a Vader-like villain strides the deck as an Arzach-type character peers around a corner.*



Two knights hunt a five-ton walrus from the safety of the ice. Their spacesuit-like armor is made of bone, feathers and rubbish.



Right, the baroque spacesuit design from *Alien* was a direct descendant from these earlier Scott concepts. (Note the layered armor shoulder plates on the warrior at the far left.)

Norse relic. But he was too dark behind that helmet.

**FF:** Here we are on the ice.

**SCOTT:** We went to Iceland to scout locations for *Tristan* and it gave us some good ideas. These are knights and their outfits are all bone and feathers and rubbish. They're hunting this huge five-ton walrus on the ice. Just above the middle of the frame on the right side you can see a little boat. That's *Tristan's* body in a skiff. He lands against the ice, nudging it, and the walrus stares at him. Then the walrus slides noiselessly into the ice-blue sea. The water's so cold that it's close to freezing, and has the consistency of oil. Well, the two knights are furious that they've lost their quarry.

**FF:** They almost look like spacemen.

**SCOTT:** Well, this sketch is where I got the idea for the plumes of vapor that the spacemen give off as they walk across the planet in *Alien*.

#### ALIEN: ENTERING THE PROJECT

**FF:** When did you first become aware of *Alien*?

**FF:** While I was developing *Tristan* and *Beut*. I was receiving tons of screenplays. I always read everything myself. You can't employ a reader. You've got to go through the chore of reading the book, the screenplay, whatever. I read

one thing called *Alien* and I thought, "Jesus Christ!" It was so simple, so linear that no one would have spotted it for me. This is why you must read yourself I think, honestly, even with a Walter Hill screenplay, the normal director with a TV or theater background would have ditched it. But it hit me between the eyeballs. I thought it was amazing.

There came a time in the deal with Paramount when I said, "I can't see myself doing another nine months without filming. I have to film." I just called up Sandy Lieberman at 20th Century Fox, the guy who had sent it to me, and I was in Los Angeles within 48 hours.

over?

**SCOTT:** He brought in a book by the Swiss artist H.R. Giger. It's called *Necronomicon*. O'Bannon produced this book out of nowhere, like it was a dirty magazine. He wasn't actually quite sure about it. Didn't know what people would think when he showed it to me. It was a covert operation.

**FF:** What was your reaction?

**SCOTT:** I nearly fell over. I'd never been so certain about anything in my life. I tell you, I'd thought we would be arguing for months about what the Beast was going to be. I thought "If we can build that, that's it." I was stunned, real-

much time with my *Heavy Metal* magazines while working on *Tristan*. I was totally oriented towards their view of the material. To me, they had gotten inside the future. They managed to put their finger on what could be. It's speculative, not futuristic, as Cobb's work was. **FF:** Many devoted readers think *Heavy Metal* is going down hill.

**SCOTT:** Its early issues were extraordinary, quite extraordinary. Now they're getting weak, losing a bit of punch. They're losing its basic intrinsic value, if there is a value to obscene comics. Somehow their illustrators are just not as good. But in the beginning I was stunned by the illustrations, the thinking and its staggering outrageous obscenity.

**FF:** Nevertheless, you kept Cobb on through the production.

**SCOTT:** I wanted to have him along as an advisor to my art director. There are very few art directors in the world, other than say Tony Masters and John Barry, who are into real SF. I didn't want to be unfair to the man I wanted to use. He could do a great Georgian drawing room, he could do *The Duellists* and that sort of environment very well, something he could relate to from books. But I knew that I'd know nothing about it when I started *Tristan*. I spend a year every day being my own art director, going through all sorts of weird periodicals and finally psyching myself into not just understanding but really being fascinated by it. I knew I could never get an art director wound up to that degree.

To say "No, you mustn't have airlocks like that. No, the engines should be so and so, not such and such. By the way, there's this line of Teflon that we could use here." So along came Cobb, N.A.S.A.-level advisor.

**FF:** This part of pre-production was mostly the gathering of information then?

**SCOTT:** Absorbing things, like a computer. But I already knew a lot out of pure instinct. Whereas if you half-listen to O'Bannon and Cobb, they almost talk in technicalities, it's almost real. And a lot of it is based on N.A.S.A. half-knowledge and cinematic expertise.

**FF:** That's it.

**SCOTT:** Dramatic knowledge.

**FF:** What a time would look like up on the screen?

**SCOTT:** Yeah. So therefore there's a fundamental understanding of how it should probably work. And you can't just do a thing with a pointed nose and stick a few rockets on. It should look like it can fly, and you should have some idea what the engines are and what they would be. So I was absorbing this sort of information like crazy. It was just a matter of endless discussions with Cobb and O'Bannon about how everything should work and what it would look like.



The Ron Cobb pre-production drawing of the Mothership is one of the few designs which remained almost totally unchanged until its final construction as a miniature.

**FF:** When was that?

**SCOTT:** January or February, 1978.

**FF:** And what transpired?

**SCOTT:** Meeting with the producers, Gordon Carroll, Walter Hill and David Giler. We discussed different approaches to the film.

**FF:** And you also met Dan O'Bannon?

**SCOTT:** Yeah. He's great. A very sweet guy. And, I was soon to realize, a real science fiction freak. You see, even though I had immediately fallen for the screenplay, I was worried about one thing. That was the old Beast. How the hell do you make the monster? Because, in every film I'd ever seen, that's always something that let everyone down. Most films you finally see it and think "Eh?" Then you try to go along with it, like you would in the theater. Instead of just believing it, you have to put yourself in a new state of mind, prepared to accept what you see.

**FF:** What did O'Bannon do that won you

ly I flipped. Literally flipped. And O'Bannon lit up like a light bulb, shining like a quartz iodine.

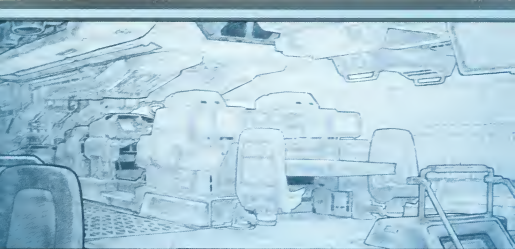
It was then that I realized I was dealing with a real SF freak, which I'd never come across before. I thought, "My God! I have an egg-head here for this field." From then on, that picture I chose (which O'Bannon says he also chose) was our alien.

**FF:** Did you also see Ron Cobb's pre-production designs for the ship?

**SCOTT:** Yes. They were smashing visuals of a very realistic, N.A.S.A.-oriented, 2001-ish environment. They were very very good, but apart from his draftsmanship and imagination, I didn't feel he had gone far enough. He was still too much in touch with N.A.S.A., and not with fantasy.

**FF:** But if they were 2001-ish in feel, what was your objection?

**SCOTT:** I suppose it came down to a matter of taste. Because I had spent so



## ALIEN PRE-PRODUCTION: THE ARTISTS

RON COBB • H.R. GIGER

**FF:** The form of pre-production that most films take does not involve the amount of art direction that a Ridley Scott film takes.

**SCOTT:** That's because I come from an art school art direction background.

**FF:** Alien's historical importance may not only be as a hardware/horror innovation. This is the first film in a long time where serious artists have played so important a role in the creation of its visual concepts. If this film is an enormous success it could launch a cycle of movies where artists will be called on to make major contributions.

**SCOTT:** I certainly hope that's the case. The possibility of enriching the medium is fantastic. In *Alien* I was setting out to make a big-scale film with a small-scale film's intensity. The contributions of Giger and the other artists helped immensely in making this more of a unique experience. *Duellists* may have been regarded as an "art" film, and that's too bad. Calling *Alien* an "artist's" film would be a lot closer to the point.

**FF:** When *Alien* was brought to Fox was there hesitation on their part in getting involved with the artists?

**SCOTT:** Absolutely. Especially over Giger until I stamped my foot and said



MOEBIUS • CHRIS FOSS

"We've got to have him. You can't just take his drawings and say, 'Fine just go out and build them.' You've got to have him." Giger is a very obsessive sort of character, but he's also very realistic. Yet because of the image he has created some executives think he is unrealistic. On the contrary, he was an industrial designer, he understands deadlines and all the aspects of working to a schedule. We drove him mad to begin with just to get the right team to work with him. Can you imagine? He's a Swiss-German being brought to Shepperton Studios. He doesn't know anybody except his lady, who helped him a lot. And he had to trust us to choose a team of technicians and really good sculptors to form around him who were good enough. Peter Vorseley was able to carry out in three dimensional form everything that Giger wanted to do, with Giger's supervision.

**FF:** Had you talked to Jodorowsky or O'Bannon about the way they had worked with the artists on the abandoned *Dune* project?

**SCOTT:** Never. No. We had to railroad into *Alien* with incredible speed because Fox gave us a start date that was practically impossible. But we took the

Photo at top of page: this Ron Cobb drawing is one of the later designs for the Nostromo's bridge. Cramped, claustrophobic quarters and minute technical detail combine to create a fundamental reality necessary to *Alien*'s psychological credibility.

Photos, center top: this sketch by Chris Foss is one of the earlier concepts for the Nostromo; it was discarded as being too futuristic. Center below: this pre-production design for the spaceship by Jean Gullrud (Moebius) is amazingly close to the final costumes.



H.R. Giger's pre-production design for the Alien egg.

challenge and held to a July date even though people wanted to put it back. I didn't want to put it back. I wanted to get in and do it. Got moving. Because if you give a man seven days, he'll take seven days. If you give him the same job to do in 14 days, he'll take 14 days. And so it was better to hang in there and hold to the date. We did start slightly unprepared in certain ways so by the end of the film the tail was rapidly catenating up to the head. On some occasions it almost overtook it. But Carlo Rambaldi was able to make Giger's creature work. Rambaldi is like an artist together, really.

**FF:** You had Giger doing the planetary terrain, the derelict spaceship and the alien. Moebius designed the crew quarters which John Mollo executed, but you are essentially responsible for the overall look of the interior of the ship. It's used, live-in space, like a ship at sea, with different levels of attractiveness, cleanliness, light and efficiency?

**SCOTT:** I thought of the *Nostromo* as different things on different decks. On the crew quarters level it's like where this girl of 11 in top hotel would live. The



The upper figure in this H.R. Giger painting, "Necronom V" from his book *Le Necronomicon*, was the inspiration for the skeletal remains of the fossilized space jockey which the *Nostromo's* landing party discovers in the derelict spaceship.





The infirmary examination was another of Ron Cobb's designs which made its appearance almost intact in the final version of the film.



This Queen pinning, 'Necronom IV' with a few changes, is the basis for the final design of the Alien creature itself. Both Ridley Scott and Dan O'Bannon were unanimous about adapting this concept for the movie.



walls are covered with modularized padding designs. There are ten thousand of every item for the various ships of the fleet, but on a plastic, Hilton-ish level.

There was a strange, marvelous sort of reality in the early scenes of 2001, where he's going up to the moon base. And sitting asleep in the seats with just the food tray there. I took all that in and thought it was incredible. It's not that far ahead of a 747. I admired the reality of it, because all it was was a hull with some interior decorations.

We tackled "A" deck (the crew quarters, bridge, infirmary), much the same way. The "B" deck was more electronic and technical, with a certain amount of styling in terms of comfort and design for the crew. "C" deck was really the hold of a freighter. You know, all the open untreated pipes and electronics and whatever else you have down there. It had the garages where they parked the various bits of equipment that they might need for different purposes. The flying machines, tractors and so on. It was all very logically thought out.

**FF:** Was there ever a plan to use any of the machinery we see around the "C" deck garage?

**SCOTT:** Well, Walter Hill and David Giler had looked upon the crew of the *Nostromo* as truck drivers in space. The vehicles were part of their gear. When I came up with the refinery idea, the machines stayed on.

**FF:** Were there scenes laid out for the use of these toys?

**SCOTT:** I didn't want the crew to just sit around onboard. I hoped that we might find a reason to get them outside and away from the ship. Perhaps for repairs on *Nostromo* or onto the refinery itself. But it worked out as too impractical an idea.

**FF:** Was there ever a conceptualization of precisely what the inside of the *Nostromo* should be?

**SCOTT:** Not at the start, but we finally had to do it in order to plan the running choreography of the crew through the ship. It just got to the point where trying to hold the various geographical toings and fro-ings of the crew in our heads was driving the production designer, the art director and me mad.

Finally it became necessary to actually build a three-dimensional, three-deck model. We had to be able to know if it was feasible to get someone from point x to point y using the sets we had available. What we found was that it would have been too expensive to do what the script said, so we used a model to work out alternative routes. It was made of cardboard and balsa wood, and was very much what you would see were you to look at a cross-section of the ship.

**FF:** Does it still exist?

**SCOTT:** No it was smashed up.

**FF:** Was it photographed?

**SCOTT:** I don't think so. It was very crude. I mean, we built it at a very early



Photos, opposite page: top, the "biomechanoid" terrain of the alien planetoid was constructed from a model by Giger, made of conduit, pipes and human bones. The portals in the side of the derelict spacecraft were designed to be psycho-sexually symbolic. Bottom, Giger's set for "space jockey" sequence was a masterpiece of plasterwork. Above, Kane searches through "egg chamber."



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stage in the production, when we were still in my commercial office in London. We even had Giger coming in there. We were there for a few months until we decamped from there to Shepperton.

**FF:** How did you view the *Nostromo*?

**SCOTT:** The thing's like the bloody Queen Mary. Do you get a sense of scale in the interior? That it's big? We couldn't build the two to three hundred foot-long corridors which it would have but it's supposed to be like one of these huge Japanese super-tankers. Three-quarters of a mile long. The refinery behind it would be God-knows how big. I mean, well... I dunno. A mile square?

**FF:** Who designed the refinery?

**SCOTT:** I did. I didn't want a conventional shape, so I drew up a sketch and handed it to the model makers. They refined it, as it were, and built the model. I originally drew it upside-down, with the vague idea that it would resemble a floating inverted cathedral.

**FF:** It looks rather like *Close Encounters*' mothership.

**SCOTT:** I soon realized that as well, so it took on another form. But I knew I didn't want to do a conventional shape because I think the machine that they're on could in fact be 60 years old and just

added to over the decades. The metal work on it could be 50 years old because it's only going to grow old to a certain extent.

**FF:** It would never corrode, but just grow obsolete?

**SCOTT:** Yes, absolutely. So it was a sort of conglomerative objective which I didn't want to be spacey in any sense of the word. There's absolutely no reason for streamlining. I would have liked to see it covered with space barnacles or space seaweed, all clogged and choked up, but that was illogical as well.

**FF:** But the *Nostromo* had to be able to fly both in space and under atmospheric conditions?

**SCOTT:** I saw it as a gigantic maneuverable jump jet. Therefore it was able to get wherever it wanted on various planets, landing in quite narrow, rocky terrain. So that's the only streamlined object in the whole thing. The refinery itself is a conglomerative mountain of technology.

**FF:** What was the refinery carrying?

**SCOTT:** Ore, I suppose. They'd do all the work inside once the "picker" (the smaller craft) would put the stuff aboard. The ore would be turned into liquid or gas for easier transference

back to Earth, the home port.

**FF:** Two approaches to space films have emerged in the past decade, and while similar in many ways, they are ultimately opposite concepts. Both 2001 and *Star Wars* are realistic, in that you are lead to believe that you are in space. But *Star Wars* was glittery almost. Whereas *Space Odyssey* was much closer to what space is. You had to make decisions about whether there was going to be sound in space, and whether space was going to be a Kubrick-like sombre place where these guys were doing their work or whether it was going to be a Lucas-oriented playground.

**SCOTT:** I took the more sombre approach. I think that unless people's minds are controlled with drugs, one of the big things any spaceman is going to come up against is melancholia. Deep melancholia. I think this will become a massive problem. You see, most of the time there's nothing very much to do. Everything is being done for you. Suddenly, in a way, the human being becomes the automaton and the machine becomes the human being. One is either going to be sleeping or somehow be put on a programme to keep the

(Continued on Page 24)





## THE STARSHIP "NOSTROMO"

### An Authentic Technological Fairyland And A Movie Set

One of the most remarkable, complex and ingenious sets ever designed for a motion picture is that of the gigantic factory-starship "Nostromo," in the new Twentieth Century-Fox space suspense-thriller *ALIEN*.

The script called for a well-used, slightly battered starship which flew through space a series of three vast oil refineries—rather like a huge intergalactic articulated truck—the whole supposedly 1½ kilometers long and weighing an awesome 200 million tons.

The *Nostromo* has three levels or decks and the designers first toyed with the notion of building a huge three-story set, but it was decided that this would prove impractical for filming purposes. So the "A" (or top) level was constructed first, filling much of the giant "C" sound stage at Shepperton Studios.

The "A" level comprised the astronaut's living areas, mess-room, computer annex, infirmary, many linking corridors and, most important and spectacular, the operational bridge. Here, amidst a veritable technological fairy-



### To Remember

land, the seven astronauts sat at their own individual and immense, leather seats to navigate and operate the starship, surrounded by 40 television screens showing different pictures of computer readouts, technological and navigational information, maps, and views of the space area outside. Masses of other technical equipment was there, plus hundreds of switches and literally thousands of flashing indicator lights. The many TV screens were fed pictures and films from a special intricate video-center situated at the side of the sound stage.

The numerous banks of circuits and electronic equipment on the walls were prepared by the props and construction departments and largely made up ingeniously from old aircraft, automobiles, and radio and TV sets.

The operational bridge on the *Nostromo* is probably the most technologically detailed and authentic scientific movie set ever constructed. And especially when you realize that everything works! Walk on to the bridge, push a button or throw a switch and something

happens, whether it's a light flashing, a door closing, an alarm buzzer sounding or a TV picture zooming into closeup.

Walk down a corridor from the bridge and you come to the mess-room, where the crew eat and relax. To one side is a small kitchen area, with every mod-con you could wish for and various foods neatly capsuled into powder and tablet form and often easily identified by tiny models of the food available, e.g. a miniature banana, orange or apple.

Stroll down another padded and illuminated corridor and you come to the infirmary, equipped with everything a doctor or nurse might need, including medicines, drugs, an operating table which glides out-of-sight into the wall, and a fearsome overhead-suspended set of surgical instruments.

In another section of "A" level is the remarkable "hypersleep" area where, in flower-petal-like, perspex-enclosed beds, the crew are able to sleep for any period they choose, from an hour to a year or more.

In an interesting lobby you find two large, perspex-fronted wardrobe cases, containing spare spacesuits for the crew, complete with helmets and other accoutrements.

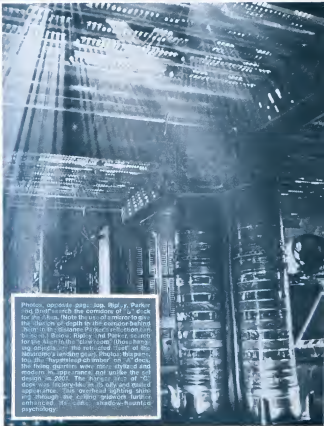
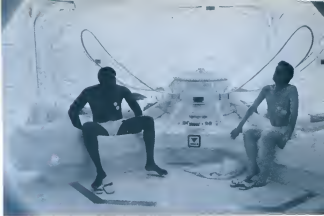
The Nostromo's movements are guided by a remarkable computer called "Mother" by the seven astronauts, who also rely on it for all kinds of other information and facts. Why "Mother"? Because its official technological identification is "MU/TH/UR/6000".

Later sequences for *Alien* were filmed on the two lower levels of the starship, built separately on other stages. "B" level, the general maintenance area and "C" level, containing the vast engine rooms plus a seemingly-endless network of complex machinery-filled corridors, and the giant "claw-room," into which the huge landing-claws of the starship retract when not in use.

"One of the basic ideas of all these complicated starship interior sets is that you can actually walk from corridor to corridor, from bridge to mess, from mess to infirmary, and so on, thus giving both the actors and the audience the feeling of being inside a vast starship—both huge and claustrophobic at one and the same time," says production designer Michael Seymour. "We want people to have the impression that it's a real place, that it's more science fact than science fiction, and also that the whole place is well used, lived in and slightly battered after years of service."

The Nostromo is a set to remember, a technological miracle come to life. While it doesn't actually achieve "lift-off" it does practically everything else.

*Alien* stars seven actors and the *Alien* itself. The Nostromo is the ninth wonder of this very authentic interstellar world.



Photos, opposite page: Top, Ripley, Parker and Brett search the corridors of "A" deck for the *Alien*. (Note the use of a mirror to give the illusion of depth in the corridor behind him.) In the distance, Parker's reflection can be seen in Below, Ripley and Parker search for the *Alien* in the "claw-room" (those hanging objects are the retracted "claw" of the Nostromo's landing gear). Below: the pairs, too, the "hypersleep chamber" on "A" deck; the flying quarters were more stylized and modern in appearance, not unlike the set design in 2001. The mirror view of "C" deck was intentionally as busy and dated as appearance. This overhead lighting shines and through the ceiling "placard" further enhanced the eerie, shadow-haunted psychology.



(Continued from Page 21)

body and mind fit. There won't be time or energy to allow yourself to enter depression.

**FF:** Was there any of that in the original screenplay?

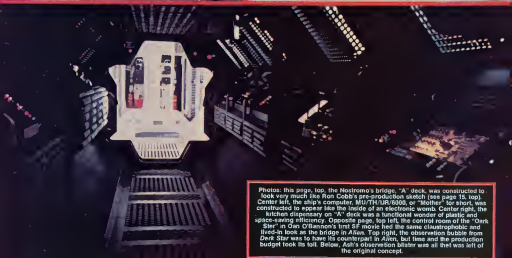
**SCOTT:** There wasn't room for it, there was no reason to have it. There were no private moments in that sense. It's simply not designed that way.

**FF:** One of the lovely touches in *Dark Star* was the guy sitting in the dome on top of the ship, just staring off into space. He's gone star-crazy.

**SCOTT:** They say actually that if you have a porthole you spend most of your time staring at space. Maybe it is a sort of space sickness. That you could become so entranced with the idea of what you're in.

**FF:** I see Ash's bubble as a direct outgrowth of *Dark Star*.

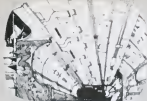
**SCOTT:** There was a bubble in O'Bannon's original screenplay. That's where the love scene took place. And that's also where the body that's ejected from the ship was bumping around. But we



Photos: this page, top, the Nostromo's bridge, "A" deck, was constructed to look very much like Ron Cobb's pre-production sketch (see page 15, top). Center left, the ship's computer, MU/TH/UR/5005, or "Mother" for short, was constructed to appear like the inside of an electronic womb. Center right, the kitchen dispensary on "A" deck was a functional wonder of plastic and space-saving efficiency. Opposite page, top left, the control room of the "Dark Star" in Dan O'Bannon's first SF movie had the same claustrophobic and lived-in look as the bridge in *Alien*. Top right, the observation bubble from *Dark Star* was to have its counterpart in *Alien*, but time and the production budget took its toll. Below, Ash's observation blister was all that was left of the original concept.



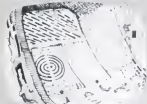




1 CORRIDOR-WGS FROM  
Pivoting Camera - Flickering Light  
Fast Mix Of Air Conditioning



2 BRIDGE-NOSTROMO  
Camera Pans Into Equipment and  
Closeup of Captain's Empty Helmet



3 BRIDGE-NOSTROMO  
Camera Thrills To Captain's Response  
SPX Of Ambient Electronic Whispers



4 CORRIDOR-WGS FROM  
Smoother - Controllor w/ Serial Flying  
Screen-Mechanical Maintenance - Still



5 FREEZE VAULT-NOSTROMO  
SPX: Hiss And Hum Of Support Systems  
Whisper Of Computer - Communication

couldn't do that. I wanted to do it. I was trying to hold it in until the last dying stroke. But that involved... what that involved was involved.

There was also a decompression sequence where Lambert gets killed and Ripley saves Parker from the similar fate of getting sucked out into space through a little tiny hole in the airlock. That was closely linked with the bubble. Because the decompression went—mainly for budget reasons—the bubble went. I guess the Ash blister was all that was left of that intention.

## ALIEN: THE 20th CENTURY-FOX PRESENTATION STORYBOARD

**FF:** While you were in California for your first meetings, Ivor Powell was in England at this point, putting together your crew for the production.

**SCOTT:** Yeah, things were rolling forward over there. At that time the film had a \$4.5 million budget but it was fairly apparent that a higher budget was inevitable. So when I came back to start casting, I also began work on a storyboard presentation to show Fox where the additional money would be spent. O'Bannon had pressured for some sort of representation of what we wanted to do, so it served both purposes.

**FF:** How long did it take you to do?

**SCOTT:** About two months. Seemed like ages, especially as I wanted to do it properly. Can't just do scribbles, you know.

**FF:** How does this version differ from the final shooting script?

**SCOTT:** Mostly in the way we had to cut out lengthy dialogue scenes, a few major (and very expensive) effects sequences, and some quite marvelous visuals. Briefly, instead of the present situation where the "egg" is found aboard the derelict spaceship, the three crewmen went further after finding the fossilized "space jockey." They see what we called "the pyramid" and when they go inside that's when the eggs are discovered. There were other cuts as well, because with the derelict and the pyramid, plus some of the other things that happened, we were looking at a \$12 or \$13 million film. We just had to pare it down to about \$8 million.

**FF:** Even after the film was in production, were you still obliged to make major cuts to stay within budget?

**SCOTT:** That's true, but this initial meeting with Fox at least put us in the right area. Ultimately, it saved a lot of time, although I would rather have spent the extra money and made the film for a two and half hour release, not the present hour-57 minutes.

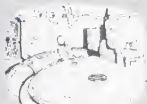
**FF:** Did you mention Giger when you



6 FREEZE VAULT-NOSTROMO  
Lights Close On Over Camera's Shoulder  
Screen-Mix Of Life-Escaping Vapor



7 CAME-IN-TCHEN  
Lights Close-Matches Proccolator  
Bulls -Althru Camera's Reaction



8 DINING ROOM-KITCHEN  
Kate Seated-Waiting For Call



9 FREEZE VAULT  
Lambert Reacts - "What Time Is It?"



10 KITCHEN-MONITOR ROOM  
Crew Members Enter In From Freeze Vault  
And Film Themselves To Color

made your presentation to Fox?

**SCOTT:** Yeah, oh yeah. I showed them the *Necronomicon*. I thought it was totally necessary to have Giger.

**FF:** In your drawings, do you reflect accurately what you wanted to see on the screen?

**SCOTT:** Very close, yeah.

**FF:** If you had been able to magically say, "That's the film. Turn it into celluloid," would it have been what you wanted to do?

**SCOTT:** A lot of what you see on the screen is there. After we made alterations, when I started to do the film I then drew a day-by-day shooting storyboard which was printed and issued.

While I was doing this, I didn't really know what the *Nostromo* corridors were going to look like. This is where I got the idea of having the helmets on the back of the seats appear to be "talking" to each other. After the lights come on, the two computers start talking to each other. I was trying to get the storyboard to be more science-fiction-y.

I wanted to have small flying objects, like sensors, which flew up and down the corridors. They would find a problem, stop by a computer bank and fix it like little handymen. I wanted to call them "mice." At the beginning of the film they would be the only things that were alive on the ship. We'd have shot a long empty corridor so you'd hear them coming before you actually saw them. Then WHOOSH! It would pass by the camera, going through the corridor. I think Fox felt it was too much in the direction of SF, and we dropped it.

We went through to a huge nostril, which would have been timed to coincide with a music cue. Liquid would pour down and out of the nostril meaning the crewman, Kane, is defreezing in the life-supported sleep chamber.

The crew are still in their sleep vaults. Kane gets up. I was going to have them naked you know, but at that stage we were still thinking we might get a PG rating, so that was lost. He comes in, coughs, smokes, makes the coffee and sits around quietly in the breakfast room by himself. I didn't really know what it was going to look like at this stage but this is what I thought it might be.

**FF:** But this is still quite similar to what we see in the film. The freezing vaults are slightly different, because now they're in the shape of a flower, but the "kitchen" is quite similar.

**SCOTT:** Kane grinds some sort of ersatz coffee. Then one of the women comes awake. And he talks to her. "What time is it?" "What do you care?" and all that sort of thing.

**FF:** The television monitor banks were your idea?

**SCOTT:** Yeah. They were. You gradually montage into finally seeing the breakfast scene.

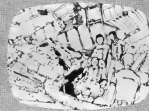
There were originally two people going into the computer room and talking to "Mother." I envisioned it at that time as being much, much smaller, a tiny thing. I wanted it to be like a barnacle-



11. KITCHEN/AIRING ROOM  
Conversations To Close Up And Wide Shots  
They Notice Computer Light On



12. COMPUTER ROOM NOSTROMO  
SFF: Computer Readouts Flash By



13. BRIDGE-NOSTROMO  
Conversation And Screening Sequences



14. BRIDGE-NOSTROMO  
Closeup Of Lambert "This Is Deep Space"  
Mother's Earth"



15. NOSTROMO-IN SPACE  
Detail Of Radio Signal Dish Antennae

encrusted interior.

**FF:** One of them looks unshaven.

**SCOTT:** Yes, right. At that time we were not as ship-shape.

**FF:** In that draft of the script, Dallas says he's forgotten the key and doesn't know how to turn the computer on. A little interchange between Dallas and Ash.

**SCOTT:** That's right. Then into the control room, where they're all sitting around scratching themselves, not quite knowing what to do. They gradually get into their jobs and contact Earth control. For the antenna, I wanted to devise an instrument that opens up like a flower. She says she's doing a long-distance message. These are the first scribbles of what the refinery would look like. The proportions changed as we developed it. They find out they have to do a repair on the engine. I really wanted to do this, desperately wanted to do this because the visual would have given the ship a huge sense of scale.

They would have come out of a small hatch on the side of the *Nostromo*, floated around on the flying bedstead, and gone inside an inspection hatch.

**FF:** You wanted them to fly in something that was not enclosed.

**SCOTT:** Right. Totally open. We called it the flying bedstead. Seemed to be logical as a maintenance thing. A man could stay on the vehicle, but still be able to use his hands to do delicate work. Because they have to check out the signal from the planet's surface, they decide they've got to go in. They start heading for the planet.

**FF:** Which looks like Saturn here.

**SCOTT:** That's what I wanted originally. I would have liked a much more sophisticated visual in the film, but with the equipment we had it was better to simplify it, rather than cock-up. I went vaguely through suggesting the idea of how the *Nostromo* would break away from the refinery.

**FF:** At some points you chose to use color in a basically all black and white storyboard.

**SCOTT:** I got bored! Very boring doing storyboards. The *Nostromo* lands, using the jump-jet principle. But as they land, they have an electrical fire, brought on by their having passed through a very dense dust cloud. The ship stands on the planet's surface, surrounded by a howling storm, which Ash sits watching from inside his blister.

They wait for sunrise and the dust storm to pass, checking atmosphere readouts which I was too lazy to draw in. The sun rises, or several suns rise, through the storm. In the engine room they're making arc-welder-laser repairs, while Dallas, Kane and Lambert prepare themselves at the hatch. The three crewmen walk out onto the planet's surface.

**FF:** What are the spacesuits in the storyboard based on?

**SCOTT:** These spacesuits are just based on me sitting down and dragging them out of me head.

**FF:** In the film the landing foot is a claw-



16 EXTERIOR-NOSTROMO  
Nacht Opens Floodlight Side Of Ship With Pilot  
Light Waterline Shuts Gears



17 EXT ENGINES-NOSTROMO  
Maintenance Shuttle Enters Engine Intake



18 INT ENGINE INTAKE  
Closeup Of The Two-Man Maintenance Rig



19 NOSTROMO-LANDER SEC  
Ship Discards Forward Floated Through  
Layers Of Air Intake Dual Stairs



20 COMPUTER CLUSTER INT  
Ash Side Slows Out All Stars Suddenly  
Hurtled By Undercarriage Air Lamp

like thing, but in the storyboard it's a tapered roller.

**SCOTT:** This is how these things change. After I'd thought about it for a while I decided not to have these huge steel rollers. Eventually it developed into a foot, and the foot became a claw after a while longer. We ended up using the claw in two places. Somehow when one does a storyboard you can suddenly work out a method to show how big the ship is.

**FF:** We can see the crew moving off away from the ship. Those little trails coming out of the top of their helmets are the progression of the frosty breath in *Tristan*.

**SCOTT:** Had a lot of trouble over that. Nearly drove me mad.

They come out of the ship and they're walking toward the signal they received while they were still in space. Now, in order to walk blind through a dust storm, or pitch blackness even with the space helmet's visor shut, we wanted to be able to let them navigate. The idea here was to have what looked like a car's dashboard put into the lower rim of the helmet, so that crewmen could "see" the terrain they were walking on on a miniature television screen.

This shows the readout, a three-dimensional picture which takes in not only the ground in front of you but to the side as well. It's like a holographic ordnance survey map.

This was a Moebius idea for the derelict. It's actually rather nice, slightly archaic and faintly Victorian for some reason or other. I quite liked it, but we finally decided it simply wasn't strange enough—not unearthly enough. It was too normal, so therefore Giger finally came at a much later stage and did another one.

**FF:** You had decided against using the Chris Foss drawings before this?

**SCOTT:** Yeah. They were wrong, somehow, a little too fantastic. And because Alien was rapidly becoming more and more real rather than fantastic I figured finally that we were going to have enough extraordinary things in it so it was better finally not to make the airship or the Earth people too extraordinary. You had to be able to identify with them.

**FF:** Giger also did the planet's surface?

**SCOTT:** Yes, but that came later as well.

**FF:** And what was created is mostly obscured in the dust storm?

**SCOTT:** Too bad, that. Well, the crewmen pick their way across the planet and see the derelict, which they enter through a large vagina doorway created by Giger. As they enter the derelict, I wanted them to come up over the edge of something and into this vast chamber that's dominated by a huge chair. In preparing this frame of the storyboard, I went through Giger's *Necronomicon* and took this character, whom we call the "space jockey," because I wanted a fossil, almost, one which you'd have a hard time deciding where he leaves off and the chair, on which he died, begins.

So here they are with this dead space



21 NOSTROMO UNDERCARRIAGE  
Selector Hatch Opens (Daway) Shows Ages  
(Daway) More Landing Walk Towards Camera



22 UNDERCARRIAGE EXT DETAIL  
Ash Shows At The Landing Party From  
The Observation Slab



23 EXTERIOR PLANETOID (DAY)  
Landing Party Takes Across Bizarre Landscape  
Of Mountainous Surface



24 EXT PLANETOID (SUNRISE)  
Survive Shot To Be Used In Retrospect To The  
Finding Of The Alien Derelict Ship



25 EXT PLANETOID  
Landing (Crested) Chisel in Crater (Lowered  
Over Mile 8pm) Sound of Signal



26 DERELICT SEEN THRU HATCH  
Two Large Objects Appear On Horizon As A  
Computerized Topographical Image



27 EXT. PLANETOID  
The Two Objects Are Revealed To Be Right  
As The Scene Parts Like A Curtain



28 EXTERIOR OF DERELICT  
Curtain Pulls Into A Closeup



29 DERELICT ENTRANCE  
Landing Party Climb Up Into Derelict



30 INT. DERELICT  
Landing Party Enter Strange Airlock Room  
Inside The Derelict Spacecraft

jockey, frozen in death to the weapon he was firing when he died. And he's kind of gargoyle-like and spooky.

Sometimes we got very close to the film's visuals in the storyboard.

Having found nothing but this long-dead gentleman in the chair, the three crewmen continue across the planet as the sun rises. In the distance they see what we called "the pyramid" in order to get into the pyramid, they have to climb a staircase. Now I got that right out of the Giger book. I didn't intend it to be exactly what we'd end up with. I threw it in really as a suggestion of what it may be like.

They climb the stairs and arrive at the entrance. The idea of a face for the doorway in the storyboard is dead wrong, because it's too normal. But there was an idea which was a nice idea of dropping down through a tube. Kane goes inside and finds a small housing and then goes down through a hole in the floor. I was doing this whole bloody thing as a vagina, going right through. And at the bottom is this membrane. It's like the pyramid is a virgin. I was going to have him slit the membrane and then gas or air or whatever would come wafting out. And he's got to go through this spooky thing of going through this slit. That went by the way as well when the pyramid and derelict sequences were combined.

That leads to the shape of him coming toward us down this tube. And he hangs in blackness. I was going to have a little pilot light ahead of him which winds down with a faint humming noise. It's got a little sensor that looks around, so the thing spins, giving off readings.

FF: Essentially the same thing as in the helmet? To see what's below?

SCOTT: Oh, sure. Touch ground before he does. Well, he's hanging there in complete darkness. Can't see a thing. Then he switches on.

Now this is an idea I wanted to do and we never again really got to develop it. But I wanted his suit to become a beacon light, illuminating what's around him. So I wanted like 10,000 bulbs on the suit. He said, "I am going to light myself up, can you boost me?" And he switches on and becomes like a Christmas tree. Would've been great. Never got to it. We'll use that again somewhere else. But it would've been really fantastic.

And he then walks around the interior, slips and falls in. He finds he's in one piece, so he doesn't panic. But he's curious about the large, egg-like things that fill the floor of the room he's in.

All the time this is going on, he's giving a report on his activities. He touches the egg and begins to examine it as it comes to life before him.

FF: Who's idea was it to have the thing inside the egg look like a hand with a tail?

SCOTT: It was Giger. I just followed a drawing of his in doing the storyboard. his is the way it appears on screen.

FF: So you'd talked with Giger at this



31 INTERIOR OF DERELICT  
Discovery Of The "Space Jockey"



32 EXTERIOR OF EGG SLO  
Curtain Climbs Up The Outer Surface



33 INT. OF SLO  
Kane Is Lowered Into SLO On Portable Winch



34 INTERIOR OF EGG SLO  
Kane Cuts The Virgin Membrane  
Which Protects The Eggs Below



35 CLOSE-UP OF ALIEN EGGS  
Kane Sees Inside Egg As It Grows



36. RIG INT SLO  
Action Inside Translucent Egg Which Explodes  
Ovis Kane's Mask A Burns Two



37. INT SLO RIG CHAMBER  
Kane Sluggs Back At The Tail Of The Alien  
Lashes About Kane's Work



38. EXT PLANT/DOOR THRU MONITOR  
Ash Watches As Landing Crew Returns With  
Kane's Body On A Tarmac



39. INTERIOR INFIRMARY-NOSTROMO  
Kane Is Brought Back To The Nostromo And  
Placed In The Auto-Doc For Surgery



40. INT INFIRMARY-NOSTROMO  
Auto-Doc Cuts The Mask From Kane's Head,  
Opening It Like An Orange

point?

**SCOTT:** Yes I had. The storyboard was done over a period of two months, so I'd already been to Switzerland. I'd seen one previous egg they'd had done in L.A. already. I just thought the egg was phenomenal. By then they'd either been too close to it or sitting on it too long because they really needed a shot of enthusiasm. I was just knocked out by it. I still think it should go on the poster.

While Kane watches, the egg turns translucent and something starts to move inside. He's just fascinated, and watches as the top of the egg parts, opening like the petals of a flower. As he looks inside, WHAM! It flies out, powered by its coiled tail, attaches itself to the faceplate of his helmet, burns through the faceplate and claps onto his face, its fingers holding his head and its tail coiling about his neck. He falls backward, crashing into the eggs with this awful thing on him. Dallas and Lambert haul him back up and improvising a travois, haul him back to the Nostromo through another dust storm. And they come up.

They are let on board by Ash, disregarding quarantine procedures insisted on by Ripley. Kane, with the alien still attached to his face is brought to the infirmary. This was a far more elaborate auto-dock than we ended up shooting. At that time I was thinking too logically, and Christ Almighty, if they brought an organism like that back on board, to begin with, everybody would stay in their suits. And they'd go straight into a hospital decontamination area. They would be isolated until they decontaminated the suits and were able to safely get out of them.

Then they'd place Kane in the auto-dock and they would be behind glass, completely insulated from him and the "face hugger." I was going to have all the work on the alien done with remote control tools, from trying to pry it loose to their futile attempts to cut it off.

**FF:** Why did this ultimately change?

**SCOTT:** In a way it just became too logical for the film, though I, personally, would have stuck with it. But there's no denying that the way we do it now is just easier. The action moves are faster. This version would have meant dwelling on it too long for the type of film we were supposed to be making. It would have meant more hardware, rather than people. Ultimately, that's the reason why I ditched it.

There was a question I had in my mind about the sequence's credibility level. I wanted some examination of Kane by the expert which is the auto-dock. It says, "Well there is no bacteriological danger in that sense of the word." Otherwise everyone's going to be talking to each other through sheets of glass all the time. That would be a hell of a hangup.

Eventually you've just got to get out of that situation. So I wanted that in there but then we finally didn't bother, because if you don't raise the question

(Continued on Page 34)



41. KITCHEN/DINING ROOM  
Kane Falls On The Table In A Fit As The Alien  
Burns Through His Chest



42. KITCHEN/DINING ROOM  
Alien Screams Out Its Birth Cry And  
Surveys Its Surroundings



43. KITCHEN/DINING ROOM  
Alien Guts Its Boogies, Lashes From Kane's Chest  
And Disappears Into Deck



44. EXT NOSTROMO  
Dallas Orders Ship To Light-Speed Eight  
Nostromo Blurs Their Pales To Nothing



45. EXT VENTRAL OBSERVATION DOCK  
Dallas Ponders His Fate From The Nostromo's  
Observation Dome. Classical Music

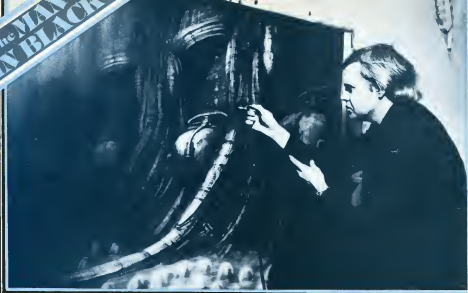


Photo above: H.R. Giger at work with his air brush

## H.R. GIGER

on a pre-production painting of the egg chamber.

# RIDING A NIGHTMARE TO SUCCESS

**D**istinguished Swiss painter and designer H.R. Giger has a unique and truly remarkable style. And it all began when, years ago in his youth, he had many strange dreams—and nightmares.

"When I awoke I would paint the things I had seen in my dreams, which made me feel much better and the dreams would go away. Until next time..."

Giger's paintings have been exhibited in leading art galleries throughout Europe, have appeared as best-selling posters and in magazines, and featured on television and in books. And they virtually defy description.

They combine eroticism, several kinds of symbolism, beautiful but highly-stylized women, machinery, bones, skulls, demons, intricate and exquisite designs, babies, blood, birds, landscapes, bondage, misery and despair and often beauty of a terrible but elegant kind. They hover on the edge of a three-dimensional hell, echoing the surrealist works of Hieronymous Bosch, Salvador Dali and Richard Dadd.

Several books have been published about Giger, an outstanding, large-format one being H.R. Giger's *Necronomicon*, published by Sphinx Verlag, Basel, Switzerland, in 1977, and the Big O Company in London in 1978. And in 1976 he designed sets for a projected French film production of Frank Herbert's classic science fiction novel *Dune*, which was subsequently abandoned.

As pre-production artist for the movie *Alien*, Giger's main assignments were to design the terrifying *Alien* itself, the surface of a mysterious planet and the interior and exterior of a strange alien spacecraft, apparently thousands of years old. He has done other designs for the picture, but these have been the major ones.

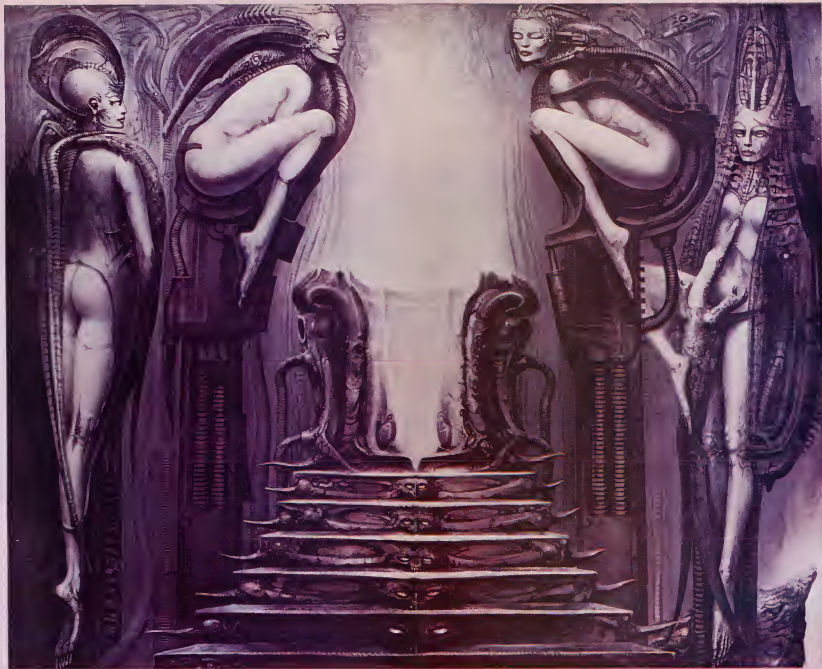
"I cannot describe the *Alien*," explains Giger, who always dresses in black, in his soft Swiss-German accent. "But it is elegant, fast and terrible. It exists to destroy—and destroys to exist. Once seen it will never be forgotten. It will remain with people who have seen it, perhaps in their dreams or nightmares, for a long, long time."

"Some people say my paintings show a future world and maybe they do. But I point from reality, I put several things and ideas together and perhaps, when I have finished, it could show the future—who knows? If people want to interpret my work as warnings about too much over population, disease and mechanization in the future, then that is up to them! I like to combine human beings, creatures and bio-mechanics. And I love to work with bones—they are elegant and functional and, after all, are part of human beings. I have many bones in my home in Zurich and I study them and use them as models. Skeletons too."

"Some people say my work is often depressing and pessimistic, with the emphasis on death, blood, overcrowding, strange beings and so on, but I don't really think it is. There is hope and a kind of beauty in there somewhere, if you look for it. The creatures I design and paint are very much like their own environment, one comes from the other."

"The colors I use are usually grey, white and brown—these are the colors of my beloved Siamese cat. I use black ink too and like to make use of an air brush quite a lot. I like white on black also—it gives my work a kind of translucent look and sometimes almost a three-dimensional appearance. The faces of women in my work are often based on women I have known in my life." The woman in Giger's life at present is beautiful, dark-haired Mia Bonzanigo, also from Switzerland, and she also works as his devoted assistant.

After viewing *Alien*, the world will have their first glimpse of H.R. Giger's unique work. They will either love it or hate it. For there are no two ways with Giger's paintings and designs. They produce an immediate reaction either way. Two things are certain. They're never boring. And they are unforgettable.





# ALIEN: THE 20th CENTURY-FOX PRESENTATION STORYBOARD

(Continued from Page 30)

nobody'll think about it. So while the machine is working on Kane, they take off. Docking with the refinery, they pull out of orbit and Dallas asks for light plus four. I wanted to go into an effect like a witch's broomstick-view of the thing as it hits light plus four, and distorts. It sort of breaks up somehow and then you lose it.

When they're in space, it is discovered that the alien face hugger has disappeared from Kane's face. He's very thirsty, and very hungry, so everyone goes in to have breakfast before returning to the sleep vault. He's joking and fooling with everyone when suddenly his face distorts and he's in terrible agony. He falls back onto the table, and they think he's having a fit.

Agony, screaming, blood, they're trying to hold him down when a blossom of blood appears on his chest. Then, without warning, this THING crashes out in what we call, "the chest burster." They all leap back, horrified, staring at him amongst all the food. The baby alien gives its birth cry and speeds away before they can stop it.

FF: What were you aiming for with the alien at this point?

SCOTT: I wanted it to be like an obscene phallic thing that was all mouth. Like a Francis Bacon image. That's really what I started to talk to Giger about. There's a triptych in the Tate Gallery of Bacon's horrible, obscene images that was just what I had in mind.

FF: Was the birth cry your idea?

SCOTT: Yeah. I wanted a birth cry and we've sort of got one. I thought it might work to have almost a lightly distorted baby's cry, but it didn't. It was slightly ridiculous rather than horrifying. It was one of those things where all we could do was try to invent a sound in the end.

This is Kane's burial. It was quite a nice idea, because I thought I'd be able to get outside with hardware. Rather than shooting them out, we were just going to give him a push and watch him slowly drift away. Meanwhile, the rest of them are watching it on monitor.

That's a view of the ship going through light plus four. Whoosh! That's the top of the craft. Later, Dallas is lying down and staring into space. Ripley comes up and says "I need relief." He says, "Oh Jesus, not now." You suddenly realize that she's asking him to make love to her. We lost that in shooting because of time pressures.

Right after that they start hunting the Beast. By this time in my work on the storyboard, the landing roller had turned into a claw. I wanted a huge claw room down in the bilge, where the ship's feet would be retracted during



46 INT. OBSERVATION DOME  
Ripley, Dallas, Gorman And Propositions  
Moe To Make Love To Her



47 INT. NOSTROMO - C-DECK  
Brett Sleeps Beneath Groggling Claws  
Alien Swings Down Gracefully And Slaves



48 INT. NOSTROMO - CLAW ROOM  
Alien-Landis, Our Wickedly Polite, Stretches In  
The Chest. He Remembers His Heart



49 INT. AIR LOCK  
Alien Ejected Down Corridor Of Air Lock



50 INT. PASSAGEWAY  
Alien's Apparatus Cut Off By Air Lock Door  
Screams, Stakes, Pines, Screams Out



51 INTERIOR PASSAGEWAY  
Dallas Hates Opens Decompression



52 INT. COMPUTER ROOM  
Ash, Hicks, Ripley, Parker, Gorman, Ash Asks  
How With One-Ash To A Host



53 INT. COMPUTER ROOM  
Ash's Blood Heart Is Reconnected To His Body  
With Wriggle, Comical, With Them



54 INT. DORSAL OBSERVATION DOME  
Kane's Corpses Surprises Gorman's As  
They Search For The Alien



55 INT. CORRIDOR - NOSTROMO  
Lambert And Parker Search For The Alien

flight, like the anchor cable tier on an ocean liner. Massive, gigantic room with all this horrible old gear around it.

Brett somehow gets separated. And while he is standing in the claw room, the thing swings down acrobatically and they are suddenly face to face. I thought that would be quite a spooky image, actually. With the thing hanging there with these arms like a mantis. Almost independent suspension, seeming to move on their own.

FF: When you shot this sequence did you use a stuntman?

SCOTT: Yes, a wire-man.

FF: It appears to float.

SCOTT: Yeah. You don't know quite how it's got up or down, it's just there, like a fly. Takes him. Bang! Bing!

FF: Is this where Fox got their first glimpse of the alien's head?

SCOTT: Yes, but the idea was that the thing wasn't full-grown yet. Also, at this time I didn't have the alien taking Brett away. I wanted it to remove his heart. When the others find him and turn him over, there's a huge cavity in his chest, reminiscent of the hole in the space jockey. But that was too much like Kane's death, so we eventually changed it.

Dallas goes after it in the air ducts, spraying all around him with an improvised flamethrower. At this stage I wanted to have it come at him so fast that it actually runs around the tube. It just comes roaring down the tube, floor, ceiling, everything. The idea was to have it be amazingly, frighteningly acrobatic. But, as in a lot of other places, I had to become realistic about the time it would take to shoot it.

By this time in the storyboarding I was prepared to just tell the rest of the plot to the Fox executives. The remaining pictures here are just the alien sequences which I wanted to do at the time. These three frames show what we called the decompression sequence.

They've tracked him to an airlock and try to blow him out of the ship by throwing the doors open and having him sucked out into space. But he's too quick for them. He's crouching, and as the airlock is thrown open, he does a flip backwards at the last moment.

A little bit of his ass is seen on the airlock door, and eats right through it, breaking the seal even after they close the door. So the ship starts decompressing. The thing smashes Parker in the face as it escapes, and one of the others is sucked out of the ship through a hole the size of a thumbnail.

The airlock opens wide and you get complete decompression. Parker is sucked against the open hatch and Ripley only manages to save him at the last minute. They both have to hold their breath until they can release some oxygen and restore the ship's atmosphere.

FF: Sort of like 2001, when Bowman has to get into the Discovery when HAL locks him out?

SCOTT: Well, decompression is decompression. If you want to do something exciting, it's probably been done



36 INT CONVEYORS-NOSTROMO  
Ripley Stops, Lets Lambert Advance/Allen  
Mortals Out Of Blackness/Takes Him



37 INT PASSAGEWAY-NOSTROMO  
Allen Advances Along Ripley As A Shield  
Lambert Incinerates Parker/Allen Unhurt



38 INT NOSTROMO-KITCHEN  
Ripley Watches On Monitor As Allen Kills  
Parker Then Lambert (Audio Only)



39 INT PASSAGEWAY-NOSTROMO  
Ripley Finds Allen/Of Allen Where Dallas  
Is Being Absorbed/Incinerates It



40 INT ENGINE ROOM  
Ripley Enters Engine Room And Finds  
Off The Cooling Systems

before somewhere. We had to cut it in the end anyway. Too costly to shoot. Too much time. But it would have been a killer.

When Ash goes berserk and attacks Ripley, Parker, just trying to knock him out, really, hits him in the head with a bat or something. Ash's head was knocked off his body at this point, and he tries to put it back on. But when that failed, he just put it down on a table and talked to them.

When they're looking for the Beast, they hear a tap-tap-tapping coming from Ash's observation blister. When they check it out, it turns out to be Kane's corpse, floating along with the ship and bumping into it. Seems that when he was ejected, he got tangled up in one of the standhorns. That, along with the love scene and the decompression sequence, was a major cut made during production.

Ripley's now in command of the ship. She goes to speak with "Mother" to try and get some help. Ash shows up in the screen version, but things were structured differently here.

Parker and Lambert, wearing their helmets because sections of the ship are without oxygen, go out looking for the alien. They're going down these tubes when the thing just steps out behind Parker.

The alien's got Parker and while it's killing him it advances on Lambert. She tries to turn the flamethrower on the alien, but it uses Parker as a shield and comes straight through the flames. Would have been quite a lot of trouble to shoot that.

When Ripley is running around on her own at the end of the film, she discovers that the alien has actually started a nest aboard the ship. The walls are covered with this thick, butter-like stuff, and Dallas, still alive, is attached to the wall in a cocoon-type of thing. It's some sort of reproductivity cycle, because Brett, or what's left of Brett, is more fully absorbed in the background, slowly turning into one of the eggs. Dallas says, "Kill me!" and she incinerates the room, killing Dallas and Brett.

FF: It was to be assumed that the pyramid and later the derelict, when the eggs were aboard it, were "nests" created out of the victims of the alien?

SCOTT: That's still the idea, though there was never time to explain it in the film.

Ripley's going to blow up the Nostromo and escape in the lifeboat, the Narcissus. She runs through the engine room at this point, and I wanted to have a big, double-decker set.

FF: That's as far as you went on the Fox presentation storyboard?

SCOTT: I explained the rest to them. Afterwards there were numerous changes made, the major one being the elimination of the pyramid and the combining of its interior sequence with the derelict. But as I've told you, there were many compromises, cuts, alterations and changes made before, during and after shooting. There always are. ■

# WHO! HUH? WHO! WHAT? DR. WHO!

If you are a fan of science fiction television programming, you have probably heard about Doctor Who—the longest running SF oriented series in the history of the medium. If you are a discriminating SF fan who lives in a market that carried Doctor Who sometime early in the past season and you happened to catch a few shows, you might be wondering what the hoopla was all about.

First, some background information. Doctor Who was first broadcast November 23, 1963, has continued uninterrupted in England through the 1978-79 television season, a new season is being prepared now.

This program has thrived in spite of Doctor Who himself quitting the series three times (indeed, there have been four Doctor Whos—or perhaps more appropriately, Doctors Who). The supporting cast has gone through countless changes. Two of the early Doctor Who multi-part serials were adapted into movie format and a different actor had the part of the venerable Doctor.

As far as most British fans are con-

cerned, Doctor Who is right up there with Flash Gordon and Buck Rogers, far surpassing such short-lived latter-day heroes as Mr. Spock and Commander Adama. Doctor Who and his prime adversaries, the Daleks, are big bucks where toy merchandising and licensing are concerned, outstripping such well-known characters as Superman and Spider-Man.

These facts must confuse U.S. enthusiasts who were rather bored by the eight dozen episodes syndicated by Time-Life television in this country. The show did not make it here in the States, and only a bare handful of stations that began running Doctor Who last September continued to do so nine months later.

Some would-be enthusiasts were a bit luckier—in 1975 Time-Life Television syndicated a number of earlier Doctor Who serials to a handful of Public Broadcast System affiliates—these programs were from the 1970-72 period and featured the third man to play the part of the Doctor, Jon Pertwee. The

OH!!!



Article by

Dr. Who and his assistant pose in this publicity still when Tom Baker became the good Doctor.



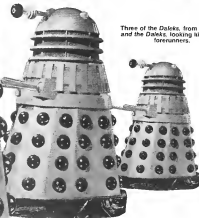
more recent attempt featured Tom Baker's first shows, from 1974 on.

This is not to say Pertwee was the penultimate Doctor Who, or that Tom Baker is an inferior incarnation. Not at all. There is a whole world of Doctor Who—a world that cannot be taken lightly. In many ways, Doctor Who is the ultimate in television SF adventure entertainment. In order to understand the phenomenon, one must first understand who Doctor Who is.

First of all, that is not really his name. Doctor Who is a doctor, but we are incapable of pronouncing his real name—sort of an intergalactic version of "Who was that masked man?" or "that scientist—his name was Doctor—who???"

Doctor Who, as it came to be developed, is a Time Lord. These folks are a race of super-scientifically oriented humanoids. They watch over the universe, aiding various civilizations while preventing the galaxy from going

## Who is Dr. Who, anyway? Where did he come from? Why is he here? And when is he going to become more than a cult figure?



Three of the Daleks, from *Dr. Who* and the Daleks, looking like R2D2 forerunners.

The Doctor is scientifically advanced and employs various super-scientific devices generally found in the TARDIS to help facilitate the plot. He does more than just push buttons—he thinks through problems and has a well-developed deductive ability. Situations often boil down to a contest of wits—the Doctor's versus the adversary's. He is fallible—he can and does make mistakes—and whereas he tries to avoid using force he certainly is not pacifistic. He will take a life if the fate of the world (or the universe) is at hand, although he will not like himself for it.

"The standards of the Doctor," Tom Baker notes, "are good over evil, good manners, and compassion." He is always willing to give his all—and for a Time Lord, his all can be his body and soul.

When the Doctor comes up against the ultimate menace, he might expend so much energy he literally wears out his body. When that happens, he undergoes a complete metamorphosis—his body changes into that of another person, and his personality adapts to fit its new "home."

Oddly enough, the Doctor wears out his body just about the same time the actor playing the part of Doctor Who decides to move on. When William Hartnell tired of the part after three and one-half seasons, the writers sent the Doctor off on an adventure with the Cybermen, the inhabitants of Mondas, the tenth planet from the sun. The Cyber-

notice of this paradox.

The TARDIS landed on Earth prior to the first adventure and for quite some time was able to transport the Doctor and his ever-changing horde of cohorts to various exotic locations but, due to a series of malfunctions initiated by the Time Lords, always returned the Doctor to Earth to live in exile. *The Silver Surfer* was another Marvel character who later fell upon this concept.

bloke: Doctor Who fell out of favor with his fellow Time Lords by overly interfering with those societies he was supposed to be monitoring. Time Lords merely observe, in a tradition popularized by the comic book characters *The Guardians of the Galaxy* and later adapted by Marvel Comics in the person of *The Watcher*. Like the four-color counterparts, the Time Lords do more than their share of interfering, so Doctor Who must have messed up something big.

To escape reprimand, Doctor Who swiped a TARDIS—literally, Time And Relative Dimensions In Space, a machine which was capable of transporting its inhabitants to any location in time or space. The TARDIS has the peculiar ability of warping space within itself as well—disguised as a typically British police call box, it is many times larger on the inside than it appears to be on the outside. Virtually every Earthling who ventures inside takes immediate

A crazed survivor of anti-matter contamination threatens all in *The Planet of Evil*.



men take over the Earth of the late 1980's (see what we have to look forward to?) and the Doctor gives his all to defeat their invasion. Worn out, he enters the TARDIS and begins to change.

Where the abrasive and snide "first" Doctor once stood, the impish Moe Howard-looking Patrick Troughton now stood. Troughton was told to play the Doctor as a sort of Charlie Chaplin

when he suffered an early and tragic death, it took producers years before they attempted to recast the part—the Master obviously undergoing typical Time Lord metamorphoses. Even then Delgado was so popular that the new incarnations never caught on.

It was during this period that the Doctor was involved in his most amazing adventure—"The Three Doctors,"

petuous, the new Doctor took to wearing floppy hats and long scarves. He was more moralistic than the earlier three, once wondering whether he had the right to kill Daleks.

"Playing the Doctor is actor-proof," Baker noted in a special one-hour tribute to Doctor Who on the BBC. "You have to surprise the audience constantly." It could not have been easy for

## **"Playing Dr. Who is actor proof," Tom Baker noted in a special one-hour tribute on the BBC. "You have to surprise the audience constantly."**

type of character, and his heart-warming pixie-like approach to the character endured for three seasons.

Two of the most important aspects of the series were introduced at the end of Troughton's reign. A formidable military force, UNIT (United Nations Intelligence Taskforce) came to the aid of the Doctor during a later invasion of the Cybermen and the ultra-military, ultra-British Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart was introduced to the series. When the Doctor later called upon the Time Lords for assistance in another matter, they helped out and, in the major origin explanation of the series, exiled him to Earth for stealing the TARDIS.

Whereas the Doctor got to keep the TARDIS, he has worn out his body during the battle. Out of the Brigadier's sight, the Doctor once again changed—and where Patrick Troughton once stood now stood Jon Pertwee, at the beginning of his five-year reign as the Doctor. Pertwee handled the role in a rather pompous manner, impatient, all-knowing and not the least bit humble.

After re-establishing his identity, the Who became the scientific advisor to UNIT and was given an antique roadster for less-conspicuous travel. Doctor Who quickly christened the vehicle "Bessie" and was given license plates "WHO-11."

Many of the episodes following these transitional serials were found in the 1975 Doctor Who syndication package. In these episodes, the Doctor encountered the villain who was destined to rank second only to the Daleks as the most popular evil entity—the Master, played by Roger Delgado. The Master was a renegade Time Lord and had all the abilities and techniques possessed by the Doctor.

As all good science fiction adversaries are wont to do, the Master desired to conquer Earth as the first phase of his vengeance against the Time Lords, and only the Doctor stood in his way. In fact, the Doctor stood in his way over eight serials, for a total of 43 episodes. The Master was so popular he faced off against the Doctor in 25 consecutive episodes.

So strongly was Roger Delgado associated with the part of the Master that,

never syndicated in the United States. The producers wanted to start their 1972-73 season off with a bang, so they dreamed up a menace so terrible and so complicated the Doctor could not be powerful enough to handle it.

The Time Lords, already tied up in a massive job of saving the universe from an energy-draining black hole, deflected the remainder of their power into the Doctor's TARDIS, and suddenly the second Doctor stood alongside the third. Together they attempted to do battle with Omega, a Time Lord hero who was trapped in an anti-matter universe for thousands of years and who, in the process, went mad. Together the two Doctors, who constantly bickered, proved insufficient to the task, so the Time Lords sent along the mental image of the first Doctor to direct the overall efforts.

By this time, William Hartnell was extremely old—he died shortly after filming his part in "The Three Doctors"—and so his entire performance was filmed in one sitting as a sort of two-way video message to the other two Doctors. Seen in the TARDIS, the younger two were able to converse with the first and get his much needed assistance. Together they managed to defeat Omega by having his world go supernova—the Time Lords were able to tap the energy from the explosion and solve their own crisis. The second Doctor went back to his own time, and the exile imposed upon the third Doctor was lifted.

At the end of the following season—Doctor Who's eleventh year—the third Doctor decided to move on and so, after a massive battle on the Planet of the Spiders, the Doctor returned to Earth having absorbed a lethal amount of radiation. This time in full view of the Brigadier, the Doctor began his transformation. His features changed, and where Jon Pertwee laid wracked with fever, Tom Baker now appeared.

Followers of the Doctor Who series had to wait to the beginning of the next serial to discover the personality of the fourth Doctor. Baker was much younger than his three predecessors and he brought an energetic approach to the character. Eager, hyperactive and im-

Baker at first, as the show's producer and story editor left with Pertwee. After the transitional serial initiated during the previous reign was taped, the fourth Doctor, his UNIT assistant and the organization's medical chief left the Earth on a series of quests, and the show started getting into trouble.

After a six-part battle with the Daleks and a four-part return match with the Cybermen, the Doctor and his assistant stopped off on Earth just long enough to help out UNIT and return the medical officer to his post. From that point on through the next two and one-half seasons, a great many of the familiar hallmarks of the Doctor Who series were gone. Certainly, the Doctor battled typical menaces, monsters, aliens and your run-of-the-mill evil Time Lords. But all the interplay with UNIT built over the previous six years was gone. So too were the Cybermen, the Yeti, the Autons—even the Earth itself was gone. And the Daleks, too.

If Doctor Who is a phenomenon, then the Daleks are a phenomenon as well. Introduced in the second serial of the series ("The Dead Planet," seven shows that followed the initial "An Unearthly Child" four-parter), the Daleks are creatures from the planet Skaro who have lost the use of their bodies and limbs—they must occupy an extremely cheap-looking robotic shell not unlike a modernistic vacuum cleaner. Initially around to take over their planet from the humanoid Thals, the Daleks quickly graduated to all forms of evil. They invaded the Earth in an attempt to turn its inhabitants into robots, they even teamed up with the Master in an attempt to destroy or take over the Earth, or at least the Doctor.

The Daleks appeared in 11 serials—65 episodes in all. The first two were adapted into feature-length movies—Doctor Who and the Daleks, released in 1965, and Daleks—Invasion Earth 2150 A.D., released in 1966. Both these movies starred Peter Cushing as the Doctor, Terry Nation, the British writer who was script editor on The Avengers and The Persuaders and who created the villainous monsters, has earned a considerable amount of money from

(Continued on Page 50)

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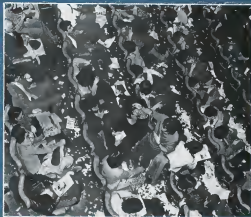
# THE EIGHTH INTERNATIONAL PARIS SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY FILM FESTIVAL

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NO ONE SEEMED TO CARE ABOUT THE POOR QUALITY OF THE FILMS. THEY HAD COME TO EXPERIENCE THE EVENT. THESE INCLUDED THROWING PAPER AIRPLANES AT THE SCREEN, DUMPING BUCKETS OF CONFETTI FROM THE

THE "FETE" AS THEY CALLED IT. THE OCCASION DEMANDED SOMETHING ON THE SCREEN, BUT FOR ALL THEY CARED IT COULD HAVE BEEN ANYTHING, SO LONG AS THEY COULD CARRY ON THE TRADITIONS OF THE FESTIVAL.



BALCONY, POURING COCA-COLA ON THE PLUSH LEATHER SEATS, DANGLING BALLOON ANIMALS FROM THE RAFTERS, AND GENERALLY CREATING AS MUCH RUCKUS AS THE CITY ORDINANCE WOULD ALLOW.

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Article by PATRICIA MORRISROE

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Pictured above and on opposite page is the cover artwork for the 6th, 7th and 8th Paris Festival Program Books. All three were painted by W. Suidmak. At left is the Paris Science Fiction and Fantasy Film Festival 1979 Grand Prize Award, La Légende d'Or. Below, the audience discusses the films in the lobby of the Rex Cinema at the festival. Note the films listed on the stand.



Inside the Rex Cinema, the largest theater in Paris, the floor is covered with confetti, paper planes, colored streamers and empty cartons of Gauloise cigarettes. It's March 8th, the first night of the 8th International Paris Science Fiction and Fantasy Film Festival. Over 3000 people have come out in the cold March rain to watch *Message From Space*, a Japanese *Star Wars* ripoff and *Summer of Fear*, a Grade C thriller, starring Linda Blair.

While an American audience might have walked out before intermission, the French showed their support by applauding, screaming and shouting obscenities at the screen. No one seemed to care about the poor quality of the films. They had come to experience the event, the "fete" as they called it. The occasion demanded something on the screen, but for all they cared it could have been anything, so long as they could carry on the traditions of the festival. These included throwing paper airplanes at the screen, dumping buckets of confetti from the balcony, pouring Coca-Cola on the plush leather seats, dangling balloon animals from the rafters, and generally creating as much ruckus as the city ordinance would allow.

"The audience has waited hours to see the films so they are understandably a little rowdy," explained Alain







Schlockhoff, director of the Paris Festival. A science fiction fanatic, Schlockhoff gives the impression that had he not organized the festival himself he would be waiting in line and screaming along with the rest. "In the past there was almost no opportunity for French audiences to see science fiction or fantasy films," he said. "The movies that did come to Paris were shown in horrible little theaters in horrible neighborhoods. I missed out on a lot of them myself and figured I'd better do something to change the situation. The festival grew out of my own needs as much as the public's."

Organized in 1972, the Paris Festival was the first in France to be devoted exclusively to science fiction and fantasy films. "When I first started talking about organizing the festival everyone thought I was 'un fou,' you know, 'crazy,'" Schlockhoff stated. "No one believed there was an audience for science fiction films. But I proved them wrong."

While there is a relatively low percentage of science fiction fans in the U.S., the number is even smaller in France. There is only one science fiction literary magazine, *Fiction*, and Schlockhoff runs the sole science fiction film journal, *L'Ecran Fantastique*. He founded it in 1989 and continues to edit the quarterly journal together with organizing his non-profit film festival. Encouraged by the event's growing success, he plans to introduce a second, bigger budget SF magazine this fall.

Although France has received such TV SF exports as *Space: 1999*, *The Invaders* and *Man From Atlantis*, few, if any, SF TV shows have ever been produced here. The most popular science fiction TV show today is *Goldorak*, a Japanese cartoon series aimed at the kiddie audience. *Goldorak* was recently released as a motion picture and the line outside the theater on opening day was a block long. *Star Trek*, nearly a legend here because of its immense influence on the genre, has never been shown, banned for its "excessive violence." Schlockhoff recently devoted 34 pages to the series in *L'Ecran Fantastique* in order to prep his audience for the forthcoming film.

While it's doubtful that *Star Trek* would have found a large cult following in France, the absence of such a popular TV series from the French market worked against future SF projects. Although *Star Trek's* impact in the U.S. was ignored for almost a decade, it did prove there was a wide-spread SF audience, attracting college students, space technologists and even serious science fiction writers to its ranks of followers. In France there was no TV show such as *Star Trek* to rally behind and no SF conventions to bring fans together. Consequently no one thought there was a science fiction audience.

With the 1st International Paris Science Fiction and Fantasy Film Festival in 1972 Schlockhoff demonstrated that, given the proper stimulus, science fiction fans would come out of the closet. When the first festival held in the 700-



Dalesque artwork (top) on the cover of the festival press kit. Above: Luigi Cozzi (with trophy) poses with unidentified members of his crew after winning the Audience Prize.



Above, *Frazetta*-like poster art for *Starcrash* under its original title, *Stella Star*. Below, *Starcrash* heroine Caroline Munro smiles for the *Paparazzi*. At bottom, half-naked *Stella* is threatened by naked steel and hand laser in a scene from the film.

sest Théâtre des Amandiers in a suburb of Paris proved successful, it was later moved to larger and larger theaters, the Tex-Pop, La Palace, the Palais des Congrès and finally, in 1977, to the mammoth Grand Rex which seats 3000.

Today the Paris Festival is one of the largest of its kind, attracting thousands of viewers who travel from all parts of Europe to participate in the event. This year the festival was sold out almost every night, bringing in a total paid audience of 30,000. "It was a great success," Schlockhoff said grinning widely. Toasting his good fortune on closing night, he invited 3000 "friends" to an all-night disco party at La Palace, Paris' premier discotheque and former site of the Festival. Surrounded by a hundred



chic-ly dressed Parisians who probably wouldn't be caught dead at an SF festival, especially this one, Schlockhoff danced until dawn.

On opening night the atmosphere was not as festive nor the crowd as fashionable. Lines started to form two hours before the eight o'clock curtain as kids jockeyed for places. Armed against the cold with bags of toasted chestnuts, assorted crêpes and Big Macs from the local McDonalds, the crowd spread along the sidewalk, blocking all pedestrian traffic on the already crowded Boulevard Poissonière.

Once inside the massive Rex Cinema the audience milled around the lobby, buying books, magazines and T-shirts from a well-stocked bookstall Man-



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# POSTER ART OF

They are much of the time mo

aged by Stan Barets, owner of Temps Futur, the largest science fiction bookstore in France, the magazine stand contained an international array of publications, including *Fantastic Films*. Unable to read English, the crowd pored over the color photos in the May issue, taking particular interest in *Superman* which was playing next door in one of the Rex's three other theaters.

One of the most striking items on sale was the official festival poster designed by W. Siudmak. If you didn't want the poster you could have the same picture emblazoned in colored glitter on your T-shirt, or the cover of *L'Ecran Fantastique*, or on the official record album of the festival, a limited-edition recording produced by Bertrand Bone featuring music by Georges Delarue and Hans Salter.

Situated on all three floors were huge refreshment stands where people could buy cheap local beer, coca-colas and sandwiches fashioned from long loaves of French bread. Beer was the most popular drink, and many of the kids after their third or fourth bottles could be seen staggering back to the crowded bar for a fifth or sixth. Unwilling to stand in line and wait their turn, the kids elbowed each other in the ribs in order to get to the front of the counter. If you were anywhere in the vicinity there was a good chance you would walk away with a pint of beer down the front of your shirt. It was all part of the "festivities."

T-shirts, magazines and sandwiches in hand, the audience slowly settled into the Rex's comfortable seats and waited impatiently for *Message From Space* (Japan 1978), a film so obviously

patterned on *Star Wars* that some scenes seem to be shot-by-shot steals. There's even a dog-fight sequence with a trio of fighter planes speeding down a chalk-white corridor.

Rather than being annoyed at the *Star Wars* similarity, the audience seemed to like the film because of it, and quickly became caught up in the all-to-familiar plot. Emeralda, the beautiful princess of Jillicia, enlists three young space adventurers to help

**Many of the kids after their third or fourth bottle of beer could be seen staggering back to the crowded bar for a fifth or sixth.**

her fight the Japanese equivalent of the Empire. Aided by a robot who beeps like R2D2 and a collection of derivative space age weaponry, including Samurai swords and laser pistols, the trio cruised outer space in a souped up spaceship. Not content to steal from *Star Wars* alone, director Kinji Fukasaku even includes an American *Graffiti*-type drag race. Despite the obvious plagiarism, many of the special effects sequences are surprisingly well executed and may indicate Japan's eventual emergence as a viable force in the 1980's science fiction market.

The only unique element in the film is

the "message from space," a collection of wainuts with lightbulbs inside. Helping to enlist the aid of the film's heroes, the illuminated nuts may well represent the art director's conception of "The Force" but on screen they come off looking like tiny pink nightlights.

"There is a great deal of interest in science fiction films in France," said Schlockhoff, "but the audience is still very, very unsophisticated." Because of the high cost of making "hardware" science fiction films and the relative unsophistication of special effects technicians outside the U.S. and England, the majority of SF films seen in Europe are inferior copies of American products. That's why a film such as *Message From Space* could be enjoyed by the crowd.

Unlike Americans who can view first-rate special effects by simply turning the TV dial to *Battlestar Galactica*, the French have suffered through a plethora of cheapie SF and horror films which have not done much to raise their sophistication level. Many made-in-the-USA horror movies which might be exiled to America's mid-west drive-in circuit are routinely shipped to Europe. They prosper due to their relative big budgets and the appeal of their American "stars."

One film destined for the European market is *Summer of Fear*, the second feature on opening night. The film stars Linda Blair who received a wild round of applause from the audience, perhaps a salute for lasting appreciation of her vomit sequence in *The Exorcist*. Blair plays Rachael, a happy-go-lucky teenager whose troubles begin when her cousin Julia (Lee Purcell) comes to





# THE FESTIVAL

is intriguing than the film.

spend the summer after her parents are killed in a car crash. Discovering pieces of burned hair and voodoo dolls in Julia's bureau drawer, Rachael begins to have second thoughts about sharing her room. Her cousin retaliates for the hospitality by killing Rachael's horse, stealing her boyfriend and giving her a severe case of acne.

Directed by Wes Craven (*The Hills Have Eyes*), a man who has spent most of his career making interior exploitation films, *Summer of Fear* is totally lacking in style, and while suspense builds at a few points, the delivery of a memorable climax is never achieved. The audience waits ninety minutes for Craven to come up with something to justify the wasted time, and the only big scene is cousin Julia breaking out of a darkroom wearing red, white and blue contact lenses. But the French audience loved the film and seemed oblivious to its overall seediness. Perhaps the very presence of Linda Blair represents "class" for foreign horror fans, though the death and destruction helped.

Throughout the festival the audience applauded the loudest when the screen was the bloodiest. Any piece of trash was immediately, if temporarily, redeemed the minute a character was stabbed, mutilated or mortally wounded. Consequently Friday, the second festival night, was a real blockbuster. It started off with a collection of trailers from several Shaw Brothers' movies, such as *The Fantastic Magic Baby*, *Night of the Devil Bride* and *Black Magic, Parts 1 and 2*. Eyeballs dangled from sockets, skeletons foamed at the mouth, and beautiful women were transformed into mutilated harlots.

"before your very eyes." The accompanying ad lines combined the grotesque with the ridiculous: "How can a good housewife become a voluptuous woman? Find out in *Black Magic, Part 1*, the most talked about film in Southeast Asia. In it you will see violent and cryptic fights and even some in dancing form. To make the film even more realistic it was actually shot on location by a Shaw Brothers' film crew." As a result of the violence and nudity, the films

**Throughout the festival the audience applauded the loudest when the screen was the bloodiest.**

carried this restriction: "No admittance to people under 17 or those wearing a school uniform." The Shaw Brothers sex and gore exhibit was greeted with howls of approval from the audience.

The second night's first feature was *Tourist Trap*, directed by David Schmoeller. Playing a schizophrenic hillbilly who runs a very lifelike wax museum, Chuck Connors lures young tourists into his estate and then turns them into living mannequins. Dressed in a mask that bears a striking resemblance to the one in *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, Connors controls his victims through telekinesis. The film was pro-

duced by Charles Band, who like Wes Craven, specializes in low budget, low quality horror and SF movies that are tailor-made for the exploitation market. A fast-buck chasing derivation of *The Fury*, *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, *House of Wax* and *Last House on the Left*, *Tourist Trap* ended up being one of the better films shown at the festival.

The second film was a Mexico-USA co-production, *Mary Mary, Bloody Mary*, filmed in 1974 by Juan Lopez Moctezuma who carries the dubious distinction of being the "leading" horror director in Mexico. Fitting in with the current vampire craze (several Dracula films have recently been released and several more are in production), the movie records the exploits of Bloody Mary, a beautiful vampire who paints Daliesque landscapes when she's not creating her own still lifes. Killing her victims by stabbing them in the neck with a gold "scorpion" hairclip, Mary drains their blood with so much relish she resembles a dog eating an Alpo all-meat dinner. Bloody Mary is played by Harper's Bazaar covergirl Cristina Ferrare in one of the true mysteries of the festival. This role would be better served by a would-be porno star, not a leading model whose face graces numerous TV and print ads.

John Carradine co-stars as a "mysterious stranger" who keeps trying to kill her. It turns out he is her father and his attempts at murder are for her own good. After a few hundred years, it seems, this particular strain of vampire starts to rot. In a sub-genre that is potentially tasteless, this could be the worst of the lot. Although the audience applauded and stamped their feet every

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that will keep you  
on the edge of your seat!



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## Getting the loudest applause at the festival was rock singer Leif Garrett who played a pre-teen transvestite and managed to get a paper airplane up his nose.

time Mary went in for the kill, the film never approached their saturation point for gore.

When questioned about the audience's unquenchable thirst for blood, Schlockhoff was evasive, but part of the explanation is probably linked to the high cost of subtitling. "Because I can't afford to subtitle most of the films I have to get movies with a lot of action," he said. "Even if I find a very good film with a lot of dialogue I just cannot select it unless it also has enough excitement to keep the audience occupied." Schlockhoff knows from past experience that when you're dealing with an audience that gets its kicks throwing food and paper planes, blood is most easily translated into "excitement." For everyone else, unfortunately, the majority of these horror films could most easily be translated into boredom.

On Saturday night the line outside the Rex Cinema was eager for a hit. Many of the "regulars" had talked their dates into seeing *Alien Zone* and *Devil Times Five over Superman*, *Ice Castles* or *Grease*. To everyone's dismay, these films were among the worst at the festival and probably discouraged these science fiction neophytes from ever seeing another SF film again.

*Devil Times Five* (USA 1973), directed by Sean McGreggor, was banned in England because it depicts a group of young children as maniacal mass murderers. Recently escaped from a mental institution, the kids torture a group of winter vacationers by setting fire to one's clothes, piercing one's head with a spear, catching one in a bear trap and putting piranhas in one's bubble bath. Even though the film was aimed at the

lowest common denominator crowd the audience at the festival grew restless after the second murder. In a short time the film was all but forgotten as people aimed paper planes at the stage, cheering loudly every time one reached the screen. Getting the loudest applause at the festival was rock singer Leif Garrett who played a pre-teen transvestite and managed to get a paper plane up his nose.

Ten minutes after the film started a rather puzzling event occurred. The doors of the press section swung open and 50 to 100 kids pored down the aisles, grabbing all available seats and floor space. Just ten minutes earlier elaborate precautions had been taken to ensure that the press section would be for journalists only. At least five guards were stationed at all entrances which were carefully cordoned off by a metal saw horse. You couldn't get through the entrance unless you showed your press pass. But once all available space was taken up downstairs Schlockhoff opened up the press section to anyone who had a ticket. It didn't make an ounce of sense, but each night the security guards kept up their charade with the journalists and then, once the movie started, would allow all the leftover ticket holders into the balcony.

Despite the juvenile antics of the audience, Schlockhoff severely underestimated their intelligence when he selected *Alien Factor* (USA 1978), a film that rightly belongs on the home-movie circuit. Directed by 20-year-old Don Dohler, *Alien Factor* is the kind of rock-bottom budget movie where the actors double as production assistants,

friends double as actors and a scene which highlights a rock band is indiscriminately thrown into the plot in order, one presumes, to give the band a bit of free publicity.

The story, which is overly similar to *Jaws*, involves a group of aliens who descend on a small town, foiling the plans of a local entrepreneur who wants to build an amusement park in the area. Under pressure to keep the "alien problem" under wraps, the sheriff seeks the advice of the local ET expert who is played by an actor doing a Richard Dreyfuss impersonation. Unlike *Jaws*, where the mechanical shark was credible if not always terrifying, the monsters in *Alien Factor* romp around town in furry brown costumes and Kiss-type platform boots. The low point of the film was its stop-motion animation sequence. As no one bothered to matte out the background, a transparent monster scurries across the ground with trees and rocks in his stomach. Long before they saw that image, however, the audience started to boo and yell "raimbursez," which means "give us back our money." For once the press and the audience were in agreement.

Following on the heels of *Devil Times Five* and *Alien Factor*, Dominique, screened Sunday night, had all the earmarks of a major hit. It was produced by Milton Subotsky who has made 27 horror films, including *Tales From The Crypt*, *The Mind of Mr. Scames*, *The Terrorists*, *They Came From Outer Space* and *The People That Time Forgot*. It was directed by Michael Anderson (*Around The World In 80 Days*) who has just completed *The Martian Chronicles* with Subotsky. It stars Cliff Robertson, Jean Simmons, Jenny Agutter (Logan's Run) and Simon Ward. But for all its outward merits, the film emerges as nothing more than a second-rate mystery in the guise of a supernatural thriller. The story, which revolves round a murder plot, suicide and supernatural revenge, is set in an isolated country mansion, complete with shadowy alcoves, mysterious servants and ghosts that go bump in the night. Unfortunately Anderson, who managed to create an imaginative 21st century in *Logan's Run*, fails to utilize his brooding landscape and the film for all its contrived atmosphere emerges as an interior designer's blueprint for a very boring horror movie.

Subotsky, who expected Dominique to win a festival award, was sorely disappointed when he returned to London empty-handed. Schlockhoff, a friend and admirer of Subotsky's, was equally upset. "I think Dominique should have won an award. It's a real shame. But I have no control over my jury. If I did, what would be the point of having a competition?" At press time Dominique was scheduled for release in London on



a double bill. One wonders if a festival award would have changed the situation. With or without awards to their credit, many films which might not have been screened in this country are seen by distributors at the festival. Some, including *Silent Running*, *Dark Star*, *Wizards*, *Sisters*, *Solars* and *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, have found release in France as a direct result of the festival.

Many directors and producers who might not have found a wide following in France have been popularized due to attention given by Schlockhoff. George Romero's *Night of the Living Dead*, Martin, *The Crazies*, and *Zombie* were shown at the Paris Festival in the past four years, while Milton Subotsky's film, *Asylum*, won the Grand Prize in 1973 and his production company, Amicus, was honored with a retrospective in 1976.

One film that failed to win a prize or even sufficient audience attention was *Eyes Behind the Stars* (Italy 1978), the second feature on Sunday night. Directed by Roy Garrett, the film was one of the better SF movies at the festival, but because it lacked French subtitles it was generally unappreciated by the audience. Amplifying several of the ideas presented in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, the movie focused directly on a government coverup involving a journalist who attempts to publish a story about the sighting of aliens and a space ship. As he continues his investigation, the reporter is harassed and eventually silenced by the government agents who are willing to murder all available witnesses to prevent the story from leaking to the press. With a bigger budget and a better director this film could have been a first-rate political thriller, a *Watergate* in Outer Space.

Because the audience had been generally dissatisfied with the past half-dozen films, Schlockhoff moved his ace-in-the-hole, *Halloween*, scheduled for Thursday, to the Monday evening slot. While the poor films failed to diminish the audience's size or enthusiasm, Schlockhoff did not want to push his luck. Already some members of the press were filling out of the theater at intermission and heading for the local cafes. On several nights the jury took extended breaks, languishing around the bar area long after the lights had dimmed. One juror fell asleep during one selection and then wondered why he couldn't remember the plot when the movie was selected as a prize winner. At least on Monday night, the audience, the press and the jury were captivated by John (Dark Star) Carpenter's *Halloween*.

As expected, *Halloween* emerged as the major hit, winning the Licoorne D'or, the festival's major prize, and the award for Best Actress, given to Jamie Lee Curtis, daughter of actors Tony Curtis



One of the more interesting aspects of the festival was the Hammer Films retrospective, which included (above) Horst Janson as Captain Kronos, Vampire Hunter, and (opposite page, bottom) Madeleine Smith, one of the Vampire Lovers.

and Janet Leigh. Where many of the other films failed because of poor or nonexistent screenplays, *Halloween* was exceptionally effective because its script manipulated every horror convention to perfection.

When a young boy murders his sister on Halloween night, 1963, he is institutionalized and diagnosed as hopelessly psychotic. 15 years later, once again on Halloween, the killer escapes from the mental institution and heads for the original scene of the crime, a small white-washed American town. There he terrorizes, tortures and kills several high school students who fail to recognize the outward signs of danger because they take place on an evening traditionally reserved for pranks.

Since *Halloween* was the first suspense film shown at the festival that was not a piece of low-budget trash, one wondered how the rowdy audience would react when confronted with a stalking killer whose murderous assaults were designed to keep the crowds glued to the screen in terror. Unlike previous screenings where the audience ignored the films in favor of their own carnival free-for-all, they were much more subdued, edging their wisecracks with nervous laughter. Most important, the fleet of paper planes were grounded for the duration of the movie. Under the circumstances, this was a major tribute.

After the excitement elicited by *Halloween*, the second feature, *Sanctuary For Evil* (USA 1978) was a complete let-down. Unlike *Alien Factor* which was an abysmal failure in a low-key way, *Sanctuary For Evil*, directed by 19-year-old Lawrence Foldes, was a larger-than-life disaster. The plot, which according to press notes is "based on real fact," spans 12,000 years of history. It starts

with early primitive man in 10,000 B.C. Los Angeles and ends with the same primitive man in the same location "today." The man is able to live until the 20th century because he has learned a secret method of regeneration: 1) find a young person in an isolated area, 2) strike up a conversation to allay their fears, 3) rip open their stomachs and eat their intestines.

During the past 12,000 years, the man has picked up a wife and child but little common sense. He deserts his daughter (played by the same woman who portrays the mother) after her "Sweet Sixteen" birthday party and disappears into the woods dressed in nothing but bluejean cutoffs, the same clothes he wore in the 10,000 B.C. segment. Taking a cue from *Dad*, the daughter runs away to Los Angeles where she is nearly raped when she climbs into a car with a group of boys who yell "Hey, kid, wanna take a walk on the wild side?" Brains definitely don't run in the family, or in the screenwriter.

After several more stomachs are ripped open and top-billed "star" Aldo Ray recites his dozen lines or so, the film mercifully ends. The program notes tell us that Lawrence Foldes is the youngest working producer/director in Hollywood. If true, this is his one and only attribute. *Sanctuary For Evil* is the type of movie that should never be shown outside the director's living room.

A question that frequently came to mind during the more than 35 hours of screenings was "Where did Schlockhoff unearth some of these movies?" While such films as *Tourist Trap* and *Summer of Fear* may have a future in the European market, *Sanctuary For Evil* and *Alien Factor* do not belong at a festival, in the European market, or any-

*A question that frequently came to mind during the more than 35 hours of screenings was "Where did Schlockhoff unearth some of these movies?"*

*Patrick*, the third Australian film, was directed by Richard Franklin. It turned out to be one of the highlights of the festival. Patrick, a coma victim, has been hospitalized since electrocuting his mother and her lover in a bathtub. Despite his immobility, he is telekinetic and communicates with his nurse through her typewriter, slowly trying to take over her actions. First he mentally ransacks her apartment, injures her estranged husband, and finally tries to convince her to commit suicide for him. Approaching his maternal like a newspaper reporter, director Franklin presents the horrifying elements in a subdued, almost factual style. This heightens the film's credibility without lessening its impact. *Patrick* was a welcome change from the rest of the exploitation films.

Underlying the problems Schlockhoff faces in organizing his festival was the absence of the scheduled *Incredible Melting Man*. According to Schlockhoff, it was not shown because its American producers lost the print and left him without an alternative several days before the actual screening. Its replacement, *Legacy*, was unsatisfying despite its relative big budget and stars Katharine Ross and Sam Elliott. Playing a young American couple who are mysteriously invited to an isolated English manor, Ross and Elliott become guests of the lord of the manor, a man who is dying of old age despite the efforts of his complex life support system. Downstairs his best friends, six damned souls who have profited from his psychic gifts, are gathered together to await news of his legacy, a supernatural force known only as "The Power." Because the audience never understands who the old man and what "The Power" means, the film is confusing and often

laborious. Despite the obvious flaws, *Legacy* won the special jury prize for interpretation.

Added to Schlockhoff's difficulty in replacing films at the last minute is France's strict censorship ruling. This was highlighted with *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, a film Schlockhoff decided to show despite a government ban. "While restrictions governing sex are extremely lax, the government is very rigid with violence," Schlockhoff explained. "It's an economic censorship really, rather than an out-and-out ban."

In order for the "violent" films to be released, the distributor has to pay a very high tax. The films are usually never shown because the distributor can't afford the money and can't make back the money because of a price ceiling on movie tickets. "It would have cost the distributor \$60,000 to release *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*," Schlockhoff said. "He didn't pay the money so the movie was banned. I showed it anyway and *Zombie* which will probably be banned as well." The government demanded that Schlockhoff pay a \$50,000 fine but he refused. "I said, 'No,' of course. So it will be okay. I have a good relationship with friends in government."

Because *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* is banned in France, its showing at the Paris Festival was the only opportunity people could have to see it. Schlockhoff had to refuse an estimated 4000 who stood in line for four hours to buy tickets. Tired and frustrated, the crowd refused to break up and tried to ram the doors of the Rex Cinema. A boy who got caught in the ensuing tug of war was almost trampled to death. The huge crowd caused a major traffic jam and it took four police wagons and the fire department to break it up. Anticipating

a similar group on the night *Zombie* was screened, Schlockhoff hired guards to contain the record crowd who were less rowdy but equally determined to get inside.

According to the movie, the strange occurrences linked with the Bermuda Triangle are actually caused by a turtle who pulls ships underwater. On the wide screen, this made-for-TV turtle looks like a flying green fry pan and the miniature of the boat never rises above bathtub level.

Double-billed with *Bermuda Depths* was *The House of the Laughing Windows* (Italy 1978), directed by Pupi Avati. The movie which won the Critic's Prize for Best Film resembles Nicholas Roeg's supernatural thriller *Don't Look Now* in its story. When a painter is brought to a tiny seaside resort to refresh a fresco on a church wall, he is oddly captivated by the original picture, created by a crazed local artist. It depicts a man with his hands strung up over his head being stabbed to death by two hooded women. As his fate is slowly entwined with the history of the fresco, the painter finds himself actually confronted by the characters in the painting who plan to create a living work of art.

On Wednesday night the audience was shown *Allen Zone* (USA 1978) directed by Sharon Miller, the only female director at the festival. A compilation of four short stories, the movie can easily be dismissed as a ripoff of the Amicus *Tales From The Crypt*-type films. It was double-billed with Roy Ward Baker's 1970 film, *The Vampire Lovers*, part of a Hammer retrospective.

While U.S. movies are more frequently shown at the festival, Australia is rapidly moving into second place, thanks to the prolific Peter Weir (*The Car That Ate Paris*, *Picnic at Hanging Rock* and *The Last Wave*). Although Weir was not represented at the festival in 1979, he has been a popular favorite in the past. This year two of fellow Australian Terry Bourke's films were screened. *Night of Fear*, the first movie of the night, was made in 1972, two years before Tobe Hooper's *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, a film it closely resembles. Although it lacks the latter picture's suspense and style, it does bear a marked similarity in its plot and sense of the grotesque. When her automobile breaks down on a deserted road, a young woman is terrorized by a madman whose ramshackled house is inhabited by hundreds of rats. Decorated in the *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* style of interior design, the house is littered with bones and skeletons and even the walls are covered with newspaper headlines detailing the maniac's murderous escapades. In a strange flashback sequence we are shown the head of a skeleton dripping with blood and decaying flesh which is almost identical to several in *Chainsaw*. The film itself is poorly done and merits scant attention, but a more in-depth comparison of it with *Chainsaw* would be of interest.

(Continued on Page 50)



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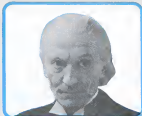
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Jon Pertwee



William Hartnell



Tom Baker



Patrick Troughton

# DR. WHO

(Continued from Page 38)

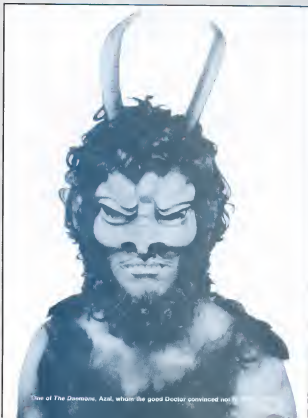
their popularity in 1977, almost three years after their final television appearance, the Daleks were still among the top four British television merchandising properties.

Whereas *Doctor Who* is inexpensively done—and often looks it—one should not mistake *Doctor Who* for a children's show, certainly not in the strictest sense. According to the BBC, for every six children who watch the program, there are four adults. Adolescents who were watching *Doctor Who* in the early 60's now watch the program with their children. The show has kept faithful to its sense of continuity, and ideas that worked years ago are alluded to in current episodes. It was a mistake to ignore these elements, and the series in its most recent season has gone back to much of its original charm. The producers let the 100th serial go by last year without note, and they heard about it from their viewers. The Daleks, at least, will return in a serial being prepared for the 1979-80 season.

The show has generated the same type of print exposure as has *Star Trek*. No less than 46 *Doctor Who* novels have appeared—all adaptations of previously broadcast serials. There also have been several *Doctor Who* monster books and the bible for the first 12 years, *The Making of Doctor Who*, was also released. This latter book carries a description of all the characters, including the first eighteen friends, companions and assistants, not all of whom were from Earth—or from Earth's present. It also carries a listing of all episodes broadcast during this period.

*Doctor Who* is a property that is peculiar to television. The effects are either computer-generated, superimposed, chroma-keyed (where one color is electronically eliminated from the video input and another image is broadcast in its place) or some combination of the three. Until recently, *Doctor Who* was produced by the system adopted by the BBC and later satirized by Monty Python where all interiors were put on tape and all exteriors were filmed and later transferred to tape. A disturbing quality to North Americans, this technique was abandoned when the BBC bought a number of mini-cams—extremely lightweight portable video cameras popular with American news crews.

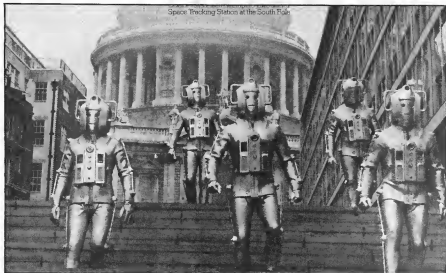
Much of the charm of the show is in the horrible monsters and aliens—out-



One of The Demons. Azal, whom the good Doctor convinced not to



Sarah Jane Smith (above), the Doctor's assistant fights one of *The Ice Warriors*. The Cybermen (below), more metal than flesh after replacements of organs and limbs with steel and plastic, battled Dr. Who





One of the war-like and savage Sontarans (above), with whom Dr. Who has already had two close encounters. The Zygons (below) living in Loch Ness with the Skarasen, a beast from their home world (the monster, get it?) was finally destroyed by Dr. Who before they conquered the Earth.



worldly creatures literally invented from make-up, masks and costuming. The producers would spend weeks creating masks and costumes which might, ultimately, appear on the screen for a few seconds. Not all the monsters succeed—the show has been known to superimpose blow-ups of rather commonplace objects—but most are usually quite effective.

Overall, one strongly suspects an entire season of *Doctor Who* costs far less than your average episode of, say, *Batman* or *Galactica*. Its cheapness is not offensive; it even adds to the fun much in the same way *Dark Shadows*'s cheapness was enjoyed by millions of fans.

The program has mastered the art of video fantasy—one cannot deny its success when it has been around for 16 years. It is complicated and exhaustive—the show has eaten up four stars, over a dozen co-stars, and no less than eight producers.

If *Doctor Who* is a child of television, it is certainly exclusive to the domain of television. The two *Doctor Who* movies released in the mid-60's were barely successful, and one recent movie project was aborted on the drawing board.

In late '76, Tom Baker acquired the film rights to the Doctor for a two-year period. He wrote a screenplay—Baker is the type who fights with directors and writers for his interpretation of the character—and scouted his own locations. After he failed to get sufficient backing from the financial community, he proceeded to sell shares in the project to fans at five pounds a share, hoping to sell 10,000 shares to get the project off the ground.

Unfortunately, Baker did not get his 10,000 shares sold. This was to provide 10% of the projected \$1 million budget; \$1 million at a time when other SF movies were routinely budgeted at 12 to 25 times that amount. Cheapness can work well on the small screen if it is done right—it is usually an embarrassment on the big screen.

It is too bad Time-Life Television took some of the least effective *Doctor Who* episodes in its major American push. The current Tom Baker episodes never made it to these shores; his earliest shows were well done, and it would have been interesting to see more of the same.

But *Doctor Who* is still running in England, and the Jon Pertwee episodes—including "The Three Doctors" and the other serials not broadcast on PBS in the States—are still being rerun from time to time on various Canadian stations.

*Doctor Who*'s reputation in England is well-deserved. It is a shame American science fiction fans have not been given the opportunity to enjoy the program properly. ■

# PAL'S PUPPETOONS



**P**RODUCER-DIRECTOR GEORGE PAL IS BEST REMEMBERED FOR HIS numerous science fiction film classics (including *Destination Moon*, *Conquest of Space*, *War of the Worlds*, and *The Time Machine*). But from 1941 to 1947, Pal also created a fantastic animated model series entitled *Puppetoons*. The *Puppetoons* ranged from Swiftian parody to simple slapstick—exploring the full scope of human relations. Released theatrically by Paramount Pictures, Pal's stop-motion productions were among the most successful short subjects of the forties.

George Pal began his career as an architect, in his native Hungary in the early 30s. Pal found the industry crowded and began to look for another line of work. His drawing ability landed him a job at Hunnia Films in Budapest, where he designed subtitles for silent movies and illustrated theater posters.

When *Felix the Cat* and *Oswald the Rabbit* were released in Europe, Pal became intensely interested in animation. He subsequently met George Feld, an American film editor who taught him how cartoons were made.

In 1931, George Pal moved to Berlin where he began work at UFA, Germany's most prolific movie studio. George quickly mastered animation and was promoted to head UFA's cartoon branch.

One year later, Pal left UFA to work independently. He was already well known in the industry, and had no problem acquiring clients.

Most of Pal's work was restricted to filming animated advertisements that were screened in movie theaters. The commercials gave Pal a steady income, but he found them creatively stifling. The *Puppetoons*' creation was prompted by boredom.

"I had been doing several commercials," Pal remembers, "and one of my jobs was being done for a cigarette company in Cologne. I finally got tired



Don Sahlin placing a head on Con-lu-shun, and Benner: numbered heads created for *The Yawning Man*, animated by Gene Warren.

of drawing the things I wanted to use real cigarettes. Then we added hands to the cigarettes, and then legs, and it came out very nice. The audiences and the cigarette company loved it."

Pal left Germany in 1933 due to the rise of Nazism and his hatred of dictatorships. He moved to Prague, where he invented a portable animation camera. Work was scarce, and Pal packed up for Paris.

Pal started producing commercials

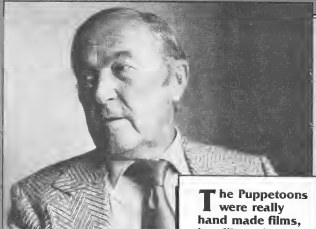
for Phillips Radio, who sent him to Holland to set up his own studio. He continued to film *Puppetoon* ads for Phillips and other companies, including Horlick's Malted Milk and the G. Walker Thompson advertising agency.

Pal had always wished to live in America. Coincidentally, Paramount Pictures saw one of his commercials and decided to bring him to the States.

"It was in late December, 1939," Pal glows, "and it was the best Christmas present I could have asked for!"

Paramount brought George Pal to Hollywood to begin work on a series of theatrical shorts featuring *Puppetoon* characters. George established a small animation studio and enthusiastically began hiring talented staff. After a year, the operation was going full force, em-

Article by JAMES BURNS



The immaculately dressed and urbane George Pal as he looked a few years ago.

**The Puppetoons were really hand made films, just like animated cartoons.**

playing over 25 effects artists. The group started turning out four to six *Puppetoons* a year.

"The *Puppetoons* were really hand made films, just like animated cartoons," explains Pal. "We tried to have a basic production schedule—six weeks of preparation, six weeks of shooting, and six weeks of post-production—but it varied.

"Instead of drawing a character, I made a puppet and shot one frame and then changed the puppet's head and shot another frame. Each word a character might say would probably take about nine different heads (one where the mouth is closed, and others with their mouths opening in proper synchronization). Each main character would usually have about 100 to 200 different heads. After 24 frames would be shot, you'd have only one second of film. That's why the *Puppetoon* process was so time consuming."

In Gail Morgan Hickman's excellent book, *The Films of George Pal* (A.S. Barnes, 1977), the author details the

"First a script would be written by Pal and his story/sketch artist, Jack Miller. Then a musical score would be composed and recorded, to which dialogue and sound effects would later be added, in order to synchronize the animated action with the words and music. Then Pal and his artists would do a series of sketches illustrating the action of each scene in the story. These sketches would then be filmed to check the action. Next a dozen woodworkers would carve the puppets from wood. These puppets generally had a series of heads with a full range of expressions, a series of legs for walking and flexible latex arms with wire inside. Finally these puppets were animated against paper-mache and cardboard sets."

Pal produced several "one-shot"

*Puppetoons*, but also saw a necessity for continuing characters. In 1941, he introduced Jim Dandy, an innocent young man who always encountered trouble. *Hoola-Boola* was one of Jim Dandy's first adventures, and one of Pal's most memorable endeavors.

In the short, Jim Dandy sails to an uncharted island where he is greeted by hostile natives. He is taken to a ritual honoring the natives' deities in front of a giant statue. As the intensity of the natives' ceremony rapidly mounts, Jim begins to wonder if he's going to be offered as a sacrifice. A clap of thunder brings the service to a standstill, and a small spirit suddenly jumps out of the statue, scaring the natives away. It continues to dance around Jim in a frenzy, until a beautiful island girl appears. The demon leaves, leaving Jim and the girl alone to enjoy their evening.

Pal's favorite character was Jasper, "a black version of Huckleberry Finn." Jasper was a wide-eyed little boy, tormented by his devilish friends Mr. Scarecrow (a talking black scarecrow), and Blackbird, a small crow. Pal created the series as tribute to both black folk tales and ethnic heritage.

George Pal produced 14 Jasper episodes, including *Jasper Tell* (a parody of *William Tell*) and *Jasper and the Haunted House*. The series enjoyed widespread popularity, but began to receive severe criticism accusing Pal of racial slurs and exploiting black stereotypes. Pal could never understand this and always felt that Jasper had been misinterpreted.

"I was born in Hungary," says Pal. "I had no prejudice against blacks. I've always detested persecution of any sort—that's why I left Germany in the thirties."

His enmity of political oppression surfaced in *Tulips Shall Grow* and

*Bravo Mr. Strauss*. Both *Puppetoons* parodied Hitler's Nazi expansions.

In *Tulips Shall Grow*, the main characters are a little boy and his girlfriend, who live in a land lush with tulips and windmills (symbolizing Holland). Their country is invaded by the Screwball Army, a military division composed of nuts and bolts.

The attack separates the two children, and the little boy runs into an abandoned church. His prayers are answered by rain, turning the Screwballs to rust.

"I made *Tulips Shall Grow* because I was furious at the Nazis for what they did to Holland. We received an academy award nomination for it, but didn't get it. In those days, they thought cartoons and *Puppetoons* had to be funny. I didn't think it was necessary to be funny—it could be meaningful."

In *Bravo Mr. Strauss*, the Screwball Army's second appearance, Pal predicted the fall of the Nazi party. The *Puppetoon* opens with the Screwballs setting out to destroy the Vienna Woods. As they begin their destruction, a statue of Johann Strauss magically comes to life. The great musician plays his violin, and, like the Pied Piper of Hamelin, leads the mechanical troop into the Danube River to its death.

The Screwball Army segments received elaborate praise, yet critics continued to object to Pal's black characters. To prove that he had a strong respect for all humanity, he filmed the classic folk tale, *John Henry and the Inky Poo*.

The myth concerns a group of black railroad workers whose jobs are threatened by the invention of a machine—the Inky Poo, that purportedly lays track faster than people. John Henry challenges the device to a spike-driving contest—if Henry wins, the railroad workers will be allowed to keep their jobs. After a suspenseful night of determined effort, John Henry defeats the Inky Poo. But the physical strain takes its toll and John Henry dies amidst his glorious victory for human dignity.

Ebony called *John Henry and the Inky Poo* "that rarest of Hollywood products that has no negro stereotypes, but rather treats the negro with dignity, imagination, poetry, and love." *John Henry* is probably the best animated drama ever produced. Even by today's standards, it stands out as a distinctive tribute to man's courage and fortitude.

By the time *John Henry and the Inky Poo* was produced, Pal's staff had grown to nearly 50 people. The *Puppetoons'* personnel was one of the most outstanding effects team ever assembled. Several employees later opened their own studios.

"At one time or another," says Pal, "we had Willis O'Brien (1933's *King Kong*), Ray Harryhausen (Jason and the Argonauts, the *Sinbad* series), Gene Warren (The *Outer Limits*, *Man From Atlantis*), and Wah Chang (The *Outer Limits*, *Star Trek*), all working

with us."

Wah Chang and Gene Warren went on to win an Oscar for their special effects in Pal's *The Time Machine*. They recently worked together again on NBC-TV's *Land of the Lost*, at Warren's Excelsior studio in Los Angeles.

"Everyone who worked with us loved the Puppatoons," Pal continues. There were never any arguments among the people who worked together. It was a happy situation.

"Just a short time ago, somebody came by the office and said hello from one of the girls who used to paint the puppets. She said she had never been so happy as when she worked on the Puppatoons."

In 1943 the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences presented Pal with a special Oscar for pioneering puppet animation techniques. Though the Puppatoons themselves never won an Oscar, they were nominated for academy awards six times.

"Today those films would win an academy award for best short subject hands down. I think we were just at the wrong time, and probably just a bit ahead of our time. In those days, when we produced the Puppatoons, cartoons with 'cat chasing mouse' won academy awards. Ours were a bit more serious."

By the late 40s, Paramount grew tired of the Puppatoons and George Pal became eager to produce feature length films. In 1947, Pal produced the decade's last Puppatoon for George Marshall's *Variety Girls*. A year later, Pal began work on *Destination Moon*.

Released in 1950, *Destination Moon* became one of the year's most popular films. The movie earned Pal an Oscar for best special effects and established him as a major Hollywood talent. The next five years saw the production of several equally successful George Pal films: *When Worlds Collide*, *The War of the Worlds*, *Houdini*, *The Naked Jungle*, and *The Conquest of Space*.

The Puppatoons finally returned in Pal's 1958 MGM release, *Tom Thumb*, starring Russ Tamblyn as the six inch tall hero. George originally intended Tom Thumb to be a Puppatoon character, but MGM insisted on using Tamblyn, a contract player who had just been nominated for an academy award for his role in *Peyton Place*.

Fortunately, the company allowed Pal to feature a few Puppatoon co-stars. Tom Thumb's Con-Fu-Shon, an Oriental philosopher, and "the Yawning Man," are two of Pal's most renowned Puppatoon creations. Extensive stop-motion animation was also utilized in a scene where Tom tells a group of magical toys his problems.

In the late 50s and early 60s, the Puppatoons were shown on television, gaining more loyal fans. Adults who grew up with those shows have kept fond memories of the Puppatoons' intense imagery, fantasy and basic humor.

Pal produced his last Puppatoon in

1971, for ABC-TV's *Curiosity Shop*.

"Chuck Jones (*Bugs Bunny*, *Daffy Duck*) asked me if I would work on a Puppatoon for his show. It was called *Tool Box*—it was a ballet of tools without faces. We decided to let the personalities of the tools determine what they would do. It worked out well."

Most television stations won't show the Puppatoons anymore, fearing the same criticism of their black characters that Pal experienced in the 40s. It's a shame, because today's children are being deprived of the splendid future memories the Puppatoons would provide.

Pal's latest attentions are focused on his new movie, H.G. Wells' *In The Days of the Comet*. Pal is developing *Comet* as a television mini-series for Paramount Pictures. It should commence filming within a year.

He has also written a sequel to *The Time Machine* with Joe Morham. Pal originally marketed *The Time Machine Part II* as a movie, but couldn't find studio support. The property was recently sold as a novel.

"The story opens far in the future with Weena pregnant and the time traveller adamant that their baby be born in his own time (1900). In spinning back to their past, the time machine is somehow crippled and materializes in wartime London in the midst of the Battle of Britain. The pair is critically wounded by a falling bomb, but in her waning moments, Weena clutches her husband and with her last ounce of strength, gives birth to their son. As the baby struggles for life amid the bursting shells, an observer sitting in a futuristic version of the original time machine, looks on. It is the son, grown to manhood, pondering the tragic death of his

parents and his own birth."

*The Time Machine Part II* will include many elements of H.G. Wells' novel that weren't included in Pal's original 1960 screen adaptation. If the book is successful, he will probably base a movie on it.

At a recent film convention, Pal got a chance to screen several Puppatoons. He was pleasantly surprised that, though over 30 years have passed since they were first made, the stop-motion productions are still entertaining.

"I was amazed while watching them," Pal grins, "because it really wasn't my work anymore. The Puppatoons go so way back. I enjoyed them so much, and there was one which I especially enjoyed called *Jasper's Paradise*. That was the one when Jasper goes up into heaven. It had a beautiful musical score."

Due to the film industry's zooming production costs, Pal feels that the Puppatoons would now be too expensive to create. The market for theatrical cartoons is gone, and TV would never be able to supply the budget for a continuing Puppatoons series. Nevertheless, Pal hopes that someday he'll be able to make modern Puppatoons to entertain the world's new generation of "children of all ages."

In conclusion, to summarize George Pal's marvelous contribution to fantastic cinema, perhaps it's best to quote a plaque he was given by ImagiNations, Rochester's Festival of World Films: "In grateful tribute to George Pal, filmmaker, animator, architect of imagination, who has shown the world to be more terrifying than we imagine and more delightful than we dream, who has given us splendid images of man at the edge of technology, art and ingenuity, reaching to extend his mastery over the universe and surviving in triumph—who in his own way has been that man." ■

**T**oday those films would win an Academy Award for best short subject hands down.



*Time Machine* co-star Alan Young chats with George Pal and a young person.

# The Quatermass Films

Hammer Film Productions' highly praised Quatermass trilogy of films. A backward glance at the 50's and 60's and the making of these films.

**F**IRST IN THE SERIES of the Quatermass films was the Quatermass Xperiment filmed at Bray Studios in the last months of 1954. Originally this was a very popular television series on the BBC, and is probably the earliest film ever to be adapted from a TV series. The Quatermass Xperiment played a very important part in the horror/science fiction cycle of the 50's, spurred by none other than the prestigious British Broadcasting Corporation. Hammer's financial situation was dark and having poor returns on a feature film, they needed a quick upsurge of cash flow. When the film opened in 1955 in England, it proved to be an enormous success, breaking box-office records in England and then again in the U.S. retitled as *The Creeping Unknown* (1956).

Hammer was well aware of the expected X certificate from the censors so Xperiment was incorporated into the working title of the film. *The Quatermass Xperiment* concentrating on Professor Bernard Quatermass, was first introduced in 1953 when it was originally broadcast in six episodes on BBC television.

The story-line for Xperiment introduces us to the valiant alien investigator Prof. Quatermass (Brian Donlevy). A rocket project ends up in tragedy when it crashes and only one of the crew of astronauts (Richard Wordsworth) survives. The hospitalized astronaut behaves erratically and doctors are uncertain about both his behavior and a strange, fungus-like growth which spreads rapidly on his hand. The astronaut flees from the medical center, but the space fungus continues to engulf his body, eventually consuming his human tissue and evolving into a huge, oozing mass of protoplasm.

random as it rolls around London. Quatermass finally corners it in Westminster Abbey, where it makes an appearance during a live TV broadcast. The thing is trapped on scaffolding and electrocuted with high-voltage wires. Undoubtedly it is one of the finest horror/science fiction films ever offered and it saved Hammer, unleashing them into the fantasy realm with a great deal of success.

Thanks to Richard Wordsworth, *The Quatermass Xperiment* holds uncanny power today with Wordsworth's impressive, sensitive portrayal of the pathetic man/monster. The film, without a question, has shades of Frankenstein's monster in its approach.

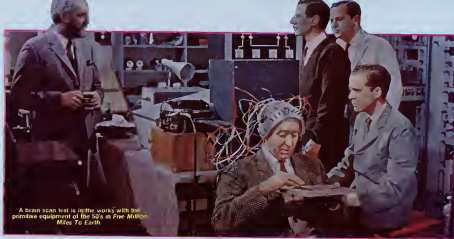
Wordsworth recalls his memorable

performance:

"That film has been with me ever since 1954. The cactus bit was truly fun. Phil Leakey (*Make-up*), covered my face in a rubber solution and I had spikes growing out of my arms. Jan Asher was playing the little girl the monster meets. I had to lurch at her and knock the head off her doll. As soon as the scene was finished, there she was crying. Naturally I knelt down to say, 'there, there, don't cry!' and everyone started yelling at me, 'get back, you fool, get back.' Of course I was terrifying her, I'd quite forgotten what I looked like in the makeup."

"My part in the film had been over by about 20 minutes, when the monster—now an oozing blob, attacks Westminster Abbey." In that sequence a great round blob of





A brain scan test is in the works with the primitive equipment of the 50's in *Free Million Miles To Earth*.

rubber solution was draped over everything. "However," Wordworth exclaimed, "a landlady up North said to me, 'Mr. Wordworth, you were so good. And in the Abbey scene—your make-up! It was marvelous!'"

*Quatermass Xperiment* was the first Hammer monster film and Phil Leakey's incredible make-up made it all work. Leakey's make-up on Wordworth managed to convey the horror of a whole body in various stages of decomposition in a manner that was far more subtle than gruesome, enhancing Wordworth's tragic mime of the character.

There are many scenes that hold you in a grip of terror and ever-mounting tension of the alien presence—the medical examination of Wordworth as the unfortunate astronaut Victor; his watching his wife

in the car; his limping across the bomb site trying in vain to hide his affliction in a wrapped overcoat. All the elements were there to make this a memorable motion picture—Val Guest's direction, Les Bowie's special effects, the actors and technicians and, of course, Bray Studios.

*Quatermass II* went into production at Bray Studios on the 21st of May, 1956, and complete filming in July, 1956. It was released in the U.S. under the title, *Enemy from Space*, (1957). In this sequel the Hammer team again performed their magic with Val Guest directing; Phil Leakey doing the make-up; Bill Warrington, Henry Harris and Frank George on special effects; Brian Donlevy again as Dr. Quatermass; Michael Ripper as Ernie, and Bryan Forbes as Marsh. For *Quatermass II* the screenplay was

written by Guest and Nigel Kneale, the talented Marx writer of the BBC TV *Quatermass* series, which accounts for the tremendous script. For this film Kneale co-adapted the script from his own TV series whereas he had no part in the writing of the first *Quatermass* film.

In *Quatermass II* you won't find any aliens, but Dr. Quatermass, with aid from Marsh uncovers a plot to control the world by amorphous beings from beyond the stars. The aliens have the ability to enter human bodies and control minds. The invaders utilize factory workers in an experiment to see if they can exist on planet Earth, but are stopped by Quatermass.

Although *Quatermass II* was written earlier than Don Siegel's classic invasion of the *Body Snatchers*, it has shades of this movie. Many films before and after it are similar in approach, for example, Jack Arnold's *It Came From Outer Space* (1953), *The Invisible Invaders* (1959) and after the fact, both *Village and Children of the Damned* of the 60's. This merely proves the point that Hammer was instrumental in setting the pace for future adventures yet to come in this genre.

Perhaps the one individual actor most associated with Hammer Films would be Michael Ripper, who played Ernie in *Quatermass II*. Ripper's screen time is usually small but with his distinct character acting his presence is a dominant factor. Ripper can give us humor or terror, whatever the part calls for. His thoughts on characterization: "When I had just read the script for *Quatermass II*, it had an affect on me. I immediately started to live the character in my imagination. I can't really claim any brilliance at putting it together, it happens rather as an instinct. A good director, as Val Guest, can be very helpful by suggesting you do this, say it this way, act and react a certain

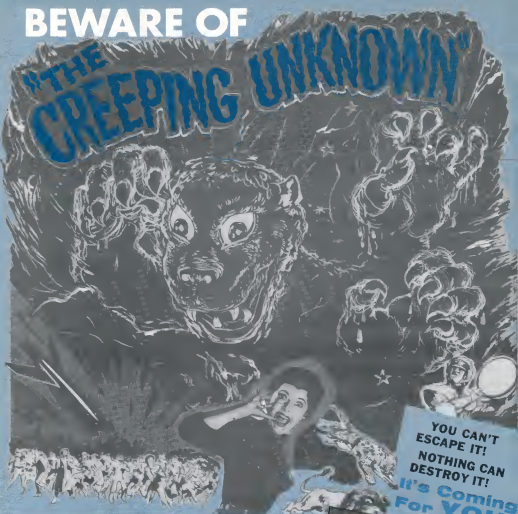


Dr. Roney (James Donald) overcomes the excruciation of the mummified wrecked alien in *Free Million Miles To Earth*.



# BEWARE OF

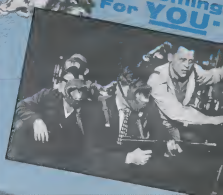
# "THE CREEPING UNKNOWN"



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ESCAPE IT!  
NOTHING CAN  
DESTROY IT!**

**It's Coming  
For YOU!**

The American Association of Film and Television Producers and Directors has issued a warning to the public that the "Creeping Unknown" is a real and dangerous threat to the lives of all Americans. It is a warning that the "Creeping Unknown" is a real and dangerous threat to the lives of all Americans. It is a warning that the "Creeping Unknown" is a real and dangerous threat to the lives of all Americans.



way to a given circumstance, you feel the part."

*Quatermass II* was photographed in black and white by Gerald Gibbs who carefully planned out each scene with Guest. Some great cinematic moments from the cinematographer's point of view are found in this film. His excellence can be seen in the murky exterior shots, photographed in what seems to be winter twilight, carrying in it an awesome, pervasive atmosphere of impending doom. Gibbs's camera work was and still is a tour de force pictorially in the disturbingly expressionist film treatment of the subject.

The sequel to *Quatermass II* did not see fruition until 1967, although it was present on Hammer's schedule for years.

## ***The Quatermass trilogy is a perfect example of the British science fiction films from that period.***

*Quatermass And The Pit* was filmed at Elstree Studios, this time in color by Deluxe. Donlevy, who brilliantly portrayed Quatermass, was replaced by Andrew Keir. When *Quatermass And The Pit* was released in the U.S. in '68 as *Five Million Years To Earth*, it was a good film, but its results were disastrous. It was buried by the release of both *Planet of the Apes* and *2001: A Space Odyssey*. The timing was off.

*Quatermass And The Pit* suffered greatly because it wasn't made at Bray, however this was true of many of Hammer's films when leaving that little studio.

For *Quatermass And The Pit* the scene is again London, where workmen building an extension to the subway system discover a pit containing skeletons. Dr. Matthew Roney (James Donald) and his assistant Barbara Judd (Barbara Shelley), of the Natural History Museum, visit the site. Further excavations uncover a strange spaceship, thought at first to be some kind of bomb.

Hearing of this, Colonel Breen (Julian Glover), who had been discussing rockets and research with Prof. Quatermass (Andrew Keir), decides that they should see for themselves. As his investigations go deeper, Quatermass becomes alarmed, but he cannot stop the efforts to open the missile. He realizes the danger for mankind and in his desperate search for the answer he is faced by the very Devil himself, a huge horned creature personifying all the forces of evil.

Kneale's writing remains powerful

## **The Quatermass Films Cast & Credits Information**

**THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT** (Released in England by Exclusive in 1955; U.S.A. as *The Creeping Unknown*; 1955 by United Artists; Running time: 82 minutes [U.K.] and 78 minutes [U.S.]; Black and White)

Director: Val Guest; Script: Richard Lound, Val Guest, from the BBC TV serial "The Quatermass Experiment" by Nigel Kneale; Photography: Walter Harvey; Art Direction: J. Wilder Willis; Editing: James Needs; SFX: Les Bowie; Music: James Bernard; Musical Supervision: John Hollingsworth; Asst. Director: Bill Shore; Camera Operator: Len Harris; Make-up: Phil Leakey; Recordist: J.D. Pearson; Production Manager: T.S. Lyndon-Haynes; Producer: Anthony Hinds. Filmed at Bray Studios.

**CAST:** Brian Donlevy: Bernard Quatermass; Jack Warner: Inspector Lomax; Mergia Dean: Judith Carroon; Richard Wordsworth: Victor Carroon; David King: Gordon Briscoe; Thora Hird: Rosie; Gordon Jackson: TV Producer, Harold Lang; Christie: Lionel Jeffries; Blake: Maurice Kauffman; Marsh: Giron Davies; Green, Stanley Van Beers: Reichenheim.

**QUATERMASS II** (1957; Released in U.S.A. as *The Enemy From Space* by United Artists; Running Time: 84 minutes; Black and White)

Executive Producer: Michael Carreras; Producer: Anthony Hinds; Director: Val Guest; Script: Val Guest, Nigel Kneale, from the BBC TV serial by Kneale; Photography: Gerald Gibbs; Art Direction: Bernard Robinson; Editing: James Needs; Music: James Bernard; Musical Supervision: John Hollingsworth; Production Supervisor: Anthony Nelson-Keys; Asst. Director: Don Weeks; Camera Operator: Len Harris; Make-up: Phil Leakey; Sound: Cliff Sanders. Filmed at Bray Studios.

**CAST:** Brian Donlevy: Prof. Quatermass; John Longden-Lomax: Sidney James; Jimmy Hall: Bryan Forbes; Marsh, William Franklin: Brand; Vera Day: Sheila; Charles Lloyd-Pack: Dawson; Tom Chitto: Broadhead; John Van Eyssen: The PRO; Percy Herbert: Gorman; Michael Rippen: Erle

**QUATERMASS AND THE PIT** (1967; Warner-Fathe U.K.; Released in U.S. 1968 by 20th Century Fox Film Corp.; Running Time: 98 minutes; Color by Deluxe)

Producer: Anthony Nelson-Keys; Director: Roy Ward Baker; Original story and script: Nigel Kneale; Music: Tinsam Cary; Musical Supervision: Philip Martell; Photography: Arthur Grant; Sup. Art Director: Bernard Robinson; Sup. Editor: James Needs; Production Manager: Ian Lewis; Editor: Spencer Reeve; Asst. Director: Bert Batt; Camera Operator: Moray Grant; Art Director: Ken Ryan; Sound Recordist: Sash Fisher; Sound Editor: Roy Hyde; Continuity: Doreen Dearnaley; Make-up: Michael Morris; Hair Stylist: Pearl Tipally; Wardrobe Mistress: Rosemary Burrows; Casting: Irene Lamb, SFX: Les Bowie. Filmed at Elstree Studios.

**CAST:** James Donald: Dr. Roney; Andrew Keir: Quatermass; Barbara Shelley: Barbara Judd; Julian Glover: Col. Breen; Duncan Lamont: Sladden; Bryan Marshall: Capt. Potter; Peter Copley: Howell; Edwin Richfield: Minister; Grant Taylor: Police Sgt. Ellis; Robert Morris: Watson; Hugh Fother: Sapper West; Noel Howlette: Abbey librarian; June Ellis: blonde

in *Quatermass And The Pit* through its juxtaposition of scientific, occult and mythological themes. Roy Ward Baker's direction, however, lacks its usual flair. His use of numerous close-ups in an effort to convey tension throughout the film fail their purpose.

Some people have said that the

best version of *Quatermass And The Pit* is the original BBC TV version. Andre Morell who played Quatermass in the TV series said, "People would stop me on the streets after seeing me as Quatermass in the TV series and say, 'Hello, Quatermass!' This type-casting can be disastrous for an actor." That's show biz!

# FESTIVAL

(Continued from Page 48)

The second film, *Inn of the Damned*, starring Dame Judith Anderson, was also directed by Bourke. In the program notes the film was billed as a "fantastic comedy," but in reality *Inn of the*

festival is not commercial enough." Schlockhoff, who was the sole member of the selection committee, viewed 150 films before he finally selected the 24 that would appear at the festival. "If you think some of these were poor, you should have seen the ones I turned down. Most of them were low-budget Star Wars imitations. I can't tell you the

*Night Stalker*, the two pilot films for the *Kolchak: The Night Stalker* TV series and *Trilogy of Terror* with Karen Black. *Burnt Offerings* (Curtis' 1976 feature film with Bette Davis, Karen Black and Oliver Reed won a special jury prize for "interpretation" that year, while his 1973 TV *Dracula* (with Jack Palance) and *Amelia* (a segment of *Trilogy of*

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**"Many of the films are very bad. It's a problem with all the festivals. The best pictures are produced by the major studios, but they won't give us the films because the festival is not commercial enough."**

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*Damned* was a 19th century Australian western, a fact that was not lost on the audience who booed non-stop through 60 minutes of the film. An instance where Schlockhoff failed to see the movie prior to the festival, it forced him to do some fast thinking. As the audience became more and more agitated, he abruptly cancelled the movie due to "technical problems," announcing that screening would be resumed at the end of the night. Curiously, many of the same people who booed the film elected to watch it the second time around.

"Many of the films are very bad," Schlockhoff confessed. "It's a problem with all the festivals. The best pictures are produced by the major studios, but they won't give us the films because the

names, though. I can't afford to offend any of the producers."

Caught between his desire to upgrade the sophistication level of his audience and the problems with obtaining quality films, Schlockhoff turns to the American market where the poor films are at least better than their European counterparts. Each year the festival exhibits a large number of American films by native directors who are virtually unknown to U.S. audiences. Others, such as producer/director Dan Curtis, are far more popular at the festival than they are in America.

Curtis dominated the 1976 festival with a feature and four made-for-TV movies, *The Norliss Tapes*, with Angie Dickinson, *The Night Strangler* and *The*

*Terror* won awards at the 1975 festival. In 1978 the prolific Curtis was back again with two TV movies, *Dead of Night* and *Curse of the Black Widow*, written by Harlan Ellison.

After sitting through several made-in-Europe horror and SF films I can understand why Schlockhoff has to rely on American TV movies to fill in the gaps. Lacking the budget, the shooting time, the technicians and the machinery, European filmmakers cannot compete with the American SF movie market. French audiences, acutely aware of the economic discrepancy, are not as demanding as many Americans who can quote budgets on all major films and who expect the movies to live up to the astronomical sums involved.

While *Star Wars* and *Close Encounters* did extremely well at the French box offices, their impact was not felt as strongly as it was at home. While U.S. audiences are growing increasingly demanding concerning special effects, the French have not progressed to the "this-film-better-stop-Star Wars mentality." For example, *Superman* and *Continent of the Fish-Men*, two films with obviously different budgets and special effects, were playing to the same crowds. Perhaps a boy at the festival summed up the situation when asked to name his two favorite fantasy or SF films. His reply: *Close Encounters* and *Orca*, *The Killer Whale*.

Fitting right in with Schlockhoff's admitted reliance on American films was a made-for-TV movie, *Bermuda Depths*, directed by Tom Kotzin and starring Burl Ives and Carl (Rocky) Weather. A juvenile love story about an adolescent beach bum who falls in love with a beautiful underwater ghost, the film loses all credibility when it tries to merge fantasy with science.

For all the frenzied anticipation, *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* was a sore disappointment to those who finally managed to get inside. Cut in several key scenes, the film's violent sense of horror was diminished to such an extent that one member of the audience, whose shirt was badly torn as a result of the near riot outside, was heard to say, "I can't understand what all the fuss was about."

Fortunately the complete print of George Romero's *Zombie* (*Dawn of the*



Peter Cushing stars in *The Vampire Lovers*, part of the Hammer Film tribute at the Paris Festival.

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LIVING DEAD and DAWN OF THE DEAD  
Science Fiction in the Theater

Dead) was shown the following night. In fact the European print is ten minutes longer than the American version. Romero is a big favorite with the festival audience, and the crowd was not disappointed. Grotesque walking corpses, amputated limbs, spilled intestines and mutilated bodies did much to brighten up audience morale. *Zombie*, a sequel to *Night of the Living Dead*, is an expansion of the original story which showed walking corpses taking over a Pittsburgh suburb. This time the corpses, moving like carnivorous sleepwalkers, invade the entire county. Trying to escape the impending horror, four refugees barricade themselves in a massive shopping mall, enjoying the fruits of capitalism. All mayhem breaks loose when the corpses, led by passing Hell's Angels, start seeping into their luxurious sanctuary. The print shown at the festival was said to be the version edited by co-producer and director of the *Bird with the Crystal Plumage* and *Suspiria*.

To lighten up the evening, Schlockhoff included *Nocturna* (USA 1978), one of the festival's wilder films. Created for the cult market, *Nocturna* capitalizes on two current trends: the Dracula infatuation and the disco craze. The end result, a kind of updated *Rocky Horror Picture Show*, may one day find its way to some midnight circuit, but God knows where.

Bored with her dull life in Transylvania, Nocturna leaves her grandfather Count Dracula (John Carradine) and heads for New York City with a drummer in a disco band. There she moves in with Dracula's old girlfriend, Jugula (played by Yvonne De Carlo of *The Munster's* fame). Unlike *Rocky Horror*, which combines wit with weirdness, *Nocturna* has few humorous moments and most of them are unintentionally supplied by Nocturna herself. Played by Nai Bonet, Nocturna's disco numbers consist of her twirling around on the dance floor like a wind-up doll. One presumes she got the role because as producer, screenwriter and general concepts supervisor, she was her own first choice for the part.

Prior to closing night ceremonies, the jury spent Sunday morning at the Palais des Congres, Paris' convention center, voting for the festival awards. Immediately selecting *Halloween* as the best film, the jury who were all French sped through the rest of the voting. The critics, a multi-national group, were meanwhile engaged in heated debate. Because *Halloween* had already won the Grand Jury Prize and *Zombie*, the second popular favorite, was not in competition, it was strongly suggested that another film—one that could be helped by the award—be selected as the recipient of the critic's prize. Unfortunately, *Halloween* was the only movie everyone could agree on. With that out of competition there was a seemingly unresolvable split between *Alien Zone*, the French choice and *The House of the Laughing Windows*, favored by the English and the one American critic,

James Delson, *Fantastic Film's* Contributing Editor.

After two hours of debating the issue one of the French critics risked ostracization from his peers and cast his vote with the British-American bloc. To everyone's complete astonishment, including director Pupi Avati, *The House of the Laughing Windows* won the "Masque d'Or."

The prizes were announced later that night during the intermission between *Star Crash* and *Captain Kronos, Vampire Hunter*. Part of the Hammer retrospective, the second film was shown in honor of *Star Crash* star Caroline Munro, the festival's special guest. *Star Crash*, which was opening shortly in Paris, was heavily publicized by Schlockhoff. In attendance were Luigi Cozzi, the film's 30-year-old director who uses the pseudonym Lewis Costes, special effects man Armando Valcaudo and stars Munro and Judd Hamera.

Wearing a purple tunic and tights outfit, the statuesque Munro, popular in Great Britain for her commercial, strode on stage to unanimous shouts of "take off your clothes." While she is being hailed as the "reigning queen of science fiction," Munro has made only a handful of films, including Ray Harryhausen's *Golden Voyage of Sinbad*. According to Cozzi, she was selected for her role in *Star Crash* because of her past experience working with stop-motion animation. Her training with Harryhausen never paid off though. Because of *Star Crash's* budget limitations, the stop-motion animation sequences were deleted from the script.

As a result of the publicity hype, the crowds were expecting major big-budget science fiction. What they got was a text book film on how not to make an SF movie. Done for under \$1 million by a producer who wanted another *Star Wars*, but was unwilling to increase the budget, the film is rather charming in its naivete but ultimately so amateurish that it could have easily been outdone by a group of film students. The special effects were handled by an inexperienced newcomer Armando Valcaudo who had never done special effects for a film until *Star Crash*. He was brought to Cozzi's attention through a mutual interest in Harryhausen. As a result of budget restrictions all the spfx scenes were shot only once, leaving no room for corrections, modifications or just plain trial and error. Forced to do everything himself, Valcaudo enlisted the aid of local schoolchildren to construct all the models. Under the circumstances, it is a miracle the effects worked at all.

The special effects were not the only problem. Discarding much of Cozzi's original script, producer Nat Wachsberger continually pressed the young director to make *Star Wars* Italian-style. Consequently the film is not even a disasterous original but rather a sub-grade carbon copy. To exacerbate the problem, during the middle of shooting all funds were cut off and the actors and crew completed the film without collecting their salaries.

If Cozzi had hoped the audience would be sympathetic to his plight, he was dead wrong. They booed, hissed and screamed "give us back our money," while the director, Munro and Hamilton sat in the center balcony in shocked silence. When Schlockhoff walked on stage to announce the awards he was greeted with another round of catcalls as well as pieces of food and scraps of paper. He dodged them all like a pro. Cozzi and Valcaudo, staggered, shellshocked, out of the auditorium to the lounge. Propped up against a railing, they stared into space, ignored by the bustle of critics who headed for the refreshment stand or stayed in their seats rather than having to face the downtrodden filmmakers.

Equally upset by the crowd's response, Caroline Munro made a fast exit from the theater not bothering to stick around for the showing of *Captain Kronos*, the second part of her "tribute." While the fickle audience chanted "Caroline, Caroline, Caroline," Munro was racing around Paris in a cab, her dreams of becoming the next Barbra Streisand fading fast in the late night drizzle.

Two hours later, the audience, disgruntled by the evening's entertainment, fled out of the Rex and headed for the Metro station. But for Schlockhoff and his 3000 guests, the night was still young. They walked down the street to La Palace and danced into the night. With the strobe lights flashing multi-colored on the sequined dancers, it was the best special effects many of us had seen all week.

On Monday at the palatial Hotel de Ville, the major of Paris handed out the prizes to the winners while several dozen guests sipped champagne and sampled hors d'oeuvres. None of the recipients were on hand to pick up their prizes, except Luigi Cozzi, who to everyone's astonishment, and some people's skepticism, had won the audience prize. Clutching the massive silver trophy, Cozzi headed back to Rome. It was a good week's work.

Schlockhoff plans to hold the 9th International Paris Festival on November 15-25th of this year. "I'm changing the date from March because early spring is a bad time to acquire films," he explained. "It's right in between the Christmas and summer seasons. This year I'm going to approach the studios early and maybe I can get several of their Christmas releases."

Everyone hopes his gamble will pay off. The Paris Festival serves an important function by underlining the existence of a large and growing SF and fantasy film audience. The present quality of the movies, however, does little to destroy the popular belief in France that science fiction fans are nothing but a bunch of crazed working class adolescents. Given the proper films, the audience just might be willing to retire their fleet of paper planes. Schlockhoff has everything going for him: the throngs of fans, the largest cinema in Paris, the attention of the press. Now if only he had the films. ■



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